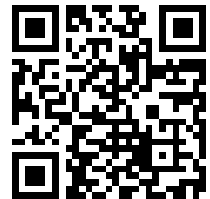

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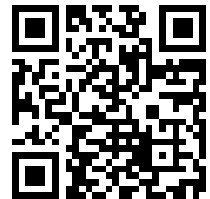
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ISLANDICA

AN ANNUAL RELATING TO ICELAND

AND THE

FISKE ICELANDIC COLLECTION

IN

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

VOLUME XI

THE PERIODICAL LITERATURE OF ICELAND

DOWN TO THE YEAR 1874

BY

HALLDÓR HERMANNSSON

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1918

THE PERIODICAL
LITERATURE OF ICELAND

DOWN TO THE YEAR 1874

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH

BY

HALLDÓR HERMANSSON

WITH THIRTEEN FACSIMILES AND SEVEN PORTRAITS



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PORTRAITS

Magnús Ketilsson	<i>facing page</i>	6
Jón Eiríksson	“ “	10
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ICELANDIC PERIODICAL LITERATURE

Mjór er mikils vísir, as an Icelandic proverb runs, may well serve as a motto for the history of the periodical press which from small beginnings has grown to be one of the most conspicuous features of present-day civilization. In the following pages this development will be described as far as Iceland is concerned, from the appearance of the first periodical publication down to the year 1874, when constitutional government was established there.

Conditions in Iceland in earlier times were especially unfavorable to all literary co-operation, to the flourishing of societies or publishing of periodicals. The country was large and thinly populated; communications between the different districts were carried on over very poor roads, which more properly might be called paths or trails, and on which only the sure-footed Icelandic ponies could be used as beasts of burden; carriages were unknown and coastwise sailings undreamt of. Such were the difficulties with which the inhabitants had to contend in this respect, that goods which were to go from one part of the country to another were sometimes sent by way of Copenhagen,¹ since from there all the merchant vessels sailed for the various ports in Iceland. Regular mail service between Denmark and Iceland was not established until 1786,² and for a long time the mail vessel made only one or two trips annually. Shortly before 1780 four overland mail routes, for letters only, were decided upon,³ but the scheduled trips were not carried out with any regularity;⁴ a really organized mail service within the country can hardly be said to have been

¹ See for example government letter of May 1, 1790, about the disposal of the Hólar books (*Lovsamling for Island V*, pp. 678-680).

² See ordinances of Aug. 18, 1786, § 16 (*Lovs. for Isl. V*, pp. 310, 334), and of June 13, 1787, I, §§ 21-22 (*ibid. V*, pp. 432-433); cf. also letter of April 14, 1778 (*ibid. IV*, pp. 437-438).

³ See ordinances of May 13, 1776 (*Lovs. f. Isl. IV*, pp. 296-302), and of July 8, 1779 (*ibid. IV*, pp. 495-501; Jón Johnsonius, *Vasa-quer* 1782, pp. 223-239).

⁴ Cf. article by Sigurður Melsteð in *Ný félagsrit VI*, 1846, pp. 105-122 (*Um blaðleysi og pósthleysi á Íslandi*).

established until the latter half of the nineteenth century;¹ and in the early mail regulations no provision is made for the carrying of papers or collecting of subscriptions. There was no administrative or commercial centre within the country. The government officials, secular and ecclesiastical, lived here and there all over the island. The governor-general, who usually was a Dane, had his official residence at Bessastaðir in the South, and the two lawmen lived on their estates, wherever these happened to be. The Althing still met at Thingvellir for two weeks in the summer, but it was no longer frequented by the general public as of old; only those came there who had some business to transact or whose duty it was to be present. If there were any centres of intellectual activity, these might chiefly be looked for at the two sees, Hólar in the North and Skálholt in the South, each of which had a cathedral school with a small collection of books which hardly deserved the name of a library. At Hólar the only printing press in the country was located for about two hundred years, but being under ecclesiastical control, it was principally devoted to the printing of religious works. On the part of individuals there was, however, no lack of intellectual interest, yet circumstances compelled every one to work by himself and depend chiefly on his own collection of books and manuscripts. In the country there were no cities or towns, or hardly even villages. In the last category might perhaps be classed the various trading stations along the coast, but the shops there were as a rule closed in winter and very few people lived there; in the neighborhood of these were often found fishing stations, but they were also usually abandoned at the end of the fishing season. Town privileges were granted in 1786 to six of the trading stations or ports,² and these after a long time finally developed into towns of some size, one of them being Reykjavík, the present capital.³ The trade monopoly was the principal obstacle to enterprise and progress, and had as bad an effect on the intellectual life as on the material welfare of the people. The

¹ See ordinance of Feb. 26, 1872 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* XXI, pp. 198-220). Cf. *Andvari*, XXVI, 1901, pp. 174-194 (*Um póstmál á Íslandi*, by Vilhj. Jónsson).

² See ordinance of Nov. 17, 1786 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* V, pp. 343-352).

³ For the early history of Reykjavík, see Bishop Jón Helgason, *Pegar Reykjavík var fjórtán vetra*, Reykjavík, 1916. 8°, pp. 138, 4 pls.—Cf. also *Vikverji* II, 1874, pp. 133-134; *Ísafold* XIII, 1886, pp. 97-98, 133-134, 139-140, XIV, 1887, pp. 95-96.

merchants were all foreigners, ignorant of conditions in the country and bent only upon their own profit.

From this it will be clear that there was no place within the country itself which could be called the capital,—so far as an Icelandic capital existed at all, this was to be found in Copenhagen. There was the seat of the government of Iceland—several hundred miles away across the sea; there gathered all Icelanders desirous of higher education; and, since the beginning of the eighteenth century, there was located the most valuable collection of Icelandic manuscripts and books, which was indispensable to all those who occupied themselves with the history and literature of the country, and which was the source upon which depended chiefly the restoration and revival of Icelandic letters as well as the national and political awakening of the people. It was therefore natural that with the Icelandic colony in Copenhagen originated in those early days most of the movements which aimed at the intellectual, economical, and political progress of the nation, and these reached the people at home through periodicals or printed books. This explains why so many of the Icelandic periodicals were printed in Copenhagen.

In some countries written news-sheets antedated the printed newspaper; they seem also to have been known in Iceland,¹ although they never were common there. No news-pamphlets or news-books were printed there,² but some of the Danish ones treat of Icelandic events,³ and doubtless many of those printed in Denmark and, perhaps, in other countries, found their way to Iceland.⁴ To what extent foreign newspapers and periodicals

¹ See Jón Jónsson, *Skúli Magnússon landfógeti*, Reykjavík, 1911, pp. 345–352.—Poems were often made on recent events, domestic and foreign, and they spread rapidly over the country, although they were not printed. These are comparable to the broadsheet “ballads” in other countries (cf. J. B. Williams, *A history of English journalism to the foundation of the gazette*, London, 1908, pp. 4–5).

² The “*Morðbréfa-bæklingar*” by Bishop Guðbr. Þorláksson (cf. *Islandica* IX, pp. 42, 48) come nearest to the news-pamphlets, but can hardly be classed as such.

³ Such were e. g. *Sandferdig oc kort Iszlandiske Relation om . . . Jordskelff . . . hoss Tyckebeey Kloster*, Copenhagen, 1627; *Iszlandiske oc Ferøesche Hylding*, Copenhagen, 1650, which event also was described in Latin by Runólfur Jónsson, *Homagii Islandici lætus Mercurius*, Hafniæ, 1650 (cf. P. M. Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark I*, 1878, pp. XLV, LXXIV).

⁴ For instance the pamphlet about the Gowrie conspiracy (see Einar Guðmundsson, *Skottlands rímur* ed. by W. A. Craigie, Oxford, 1908, pp. 3–4). For other pamphlets, see *Islandica* X, pp. 22, 29.

were read in Iceland it is impossible to say; they certainly were not common there, only a few of the wealthier men may have received some regularly. One is, however, surprised to find how well-informed many people in Iceland were about foreign events, as is clearly seen from annals and other similar writings. This information must have been gathered partly from books and news-pamphlets, partly through correspondence, and doubtless to some extent also from merchants, sea-captains, and sailors.

Neither laws nor the government interfered in any way with the development of the press in Iceland. No rigorous censorship was exercised, and although certain rules were to be observed regarding the press,¹ they were of no practical consequence. It was not until late in the period here treated that some difficulties arose between the authorities and the press, and they were not of a very serious character.

The earliest periodical publication in Icelandic was the report of the yearly sessions of the Althing at Thingvellir which was printed for the first time at Skálholt in 1696 under the title of *Alþingisbóken*,—this being changed from 1743 to that of *Lögþingisbóken*. Thenceforth it was printed annually until 1800, when the Althing was abolished (by royal letter of June 7, 1800), with the exception of the years 1698–1703, 1717, 1729–30, 1733, 1738–42, 1757, 1759–64, 1770, and 1772; the reports for these years must have circulated in manuscript as was customary before 1696. The printed reports represent thin quarto volumes, only those after 1795 being in octavo; they were printed at Skálholt the first two years (1696–97), at Hólar from 1704 to 1771, at Hrapsey from 1773 to 1794, and finally at Leirárargarðar from 1795 to 1800. They were, as a rule, signed by the Secretary of the Althing (*Landsþingis-skrifari*), some even having his autograph signature and seal; they were published at public expense; the years 1795–98, however, were published by Björn Gottskálksson and the years 1799–1800 by *Íslands almenna Uppfræðingarstíptun*.² The power and functions of the Althing had

¹ Only a few of the Danish ordinances about the press were ever promulgated in Iceland; see especially the one of Sept. 27, 1799, and circular letter of the same date (*Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 386–397, 404–409; *Minniso. tíð.* II, p. 456), cf. government letter of Feb. 25, 1837 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* XI, pp. 20–31). See also privilege for Guðm. Schagfjörð regarding the Leirárargarðar press of Nov. 8, 1799 (*ibid.* VI, pp. 410–411).

² The *Alþingis-* and *Lögþingisbækur* are practically all described in W. Fiske, *Bibliographical Notices*, I, IV–VI, 1886–1907.—The Icelandic Historical

been much restricted when the absolute monarchy was established in the island in 1662. Henceforth the proceedings consisted chiefly of disposing of legal cases which had been appealed



Þar átti síu að halda þad sem gíordest og þrammpoor íslátt
 Behanda an almennilegu Þearnar Þinge
 1696.



Óptar Ost og þorkage Þalþala og Þelþurðigs. Hr. Ólafur
 2NS Múllur til Rotterdam. Kongl. Mayst. Amptmanns a Flaude/ etc.
 Same Alvarlegre Þindred re Logmanni beggia/ Hr. Ólafur Ólafur
 ÞAKSONAR z Hr. LAURIDZON ENZELZANSON
 Gottup/ Girnef Landþings skriparans Ólafur Matthysenar/
 Med Consens og Samþykke þess Høloplega Cancelli Collegii i
 Kopenhápn.

Printud i KOPENHAGEN/ Ap Joene Snorrason/
 1696.

Title-page of the first *Alþingisbók*.

from the lower courts, of promulgating new laws, and of making other announcements of public interest. Thus this venerable institution had become a mere shadow of its former self; the

Society has now commenced to publish the transactions of the Althing from 1570, and two volumes have appeared down to date.—Björn Stephensen published, during the years 1797–1803, the *Acta Yfirrettarins* in five octavo volumes, covering the years 1756–96.

abolition of it nevertheless was greatly regretted by the people, principally because of its glorious past and of the traditions connected with it; but under the circumstances it was probably expedient to replace it by a National Superior Court situated in Reykjavík, which was gradually developing into the capital of the country.

Down to the second half of the eighteenth century there was only one press in Iceland, which, as stated above, was under the control of the bishops of Hólar; for a short period (1685-1703) it was kept at Skálholt,¹ and thereafter moved back to Hólar. But by a royal letter of June 4, 1772,² a privilege was granted to Ólafur Olavius to establish a printing press within the Skálholt diocese, and he was permitted to print there books of every kind except religious works and school books, this exception being made to protect the Hólar press from competition. Being without means of his own, Olavius had to borrow money for the press from Bogi Benediktsson, a wealthy farmer of Hrapsey in Breiðifjörður.³ In 1773 Olavius landed with the press at Stykkishólmur, a trading station on Breiðifjörður, but as no place was to be found for it there, it was brought to Hrapsey where it remained for about twenty years. Soon there arose some difficulties between Olavius and Bogi; the latter finally bought Olavius' share in the press, thus becoming the sole owner of it.⁴ Henceforth Bogi with the assistance of Magnús Ketilsson, prefect of Dalasýsla, had charge of it and its publications.

In many respects Magnús Ketilsson⁵ was in advance of his age. He was a man of considerable learning and wide interests both in literary matters and practical affairs. His connection with the press gave rise to the first newspaper printed in Iceland. In October 1773 appeared the first number of the **Íslandske Maanedts Tidender**, a monthly in Danish, which he continued to edit for the following three years. Volumes one and two seem

¹ See privilege of Feb. 14, 1685 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* I, p. 428).

² *Lovs. f. Isl.* III, pp. 773-774.

³ For Bogi's life, see Bogi Benediktsson, *Æfúgrip sedganna Jóns Péturssonar, Bened. Jónssonar, Boga Benediktssonar*, etc. Videyarklaustri, 1823. 8°.

⁴ See *Íslandske Maanedts Tidender* I, pp. 81-83.

⁵ Magnús Ketilsson was born Jan. 29, 1730, and died July 18, 1803. For his life, see Bogi Benediktsson, *Sýslumannaæfir* II, pp. 718-733; P. Thoroddsen, *Landfræðissaga Íslands* III, pp. 122-124. The portrait published here is by S. M. Hólm (cf. *Óðinn* VI, p. 45) and doubtless is bad.

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MAGNÚS KETILSSON

to have been issued from the Hrappsey press in regular monthly numbers of sixteen pages in small octavo, until September 1775. Volume three, covering October 1775 to September 1776, was printed in Copenhagen; it has a title-page as the others have not. With the exception of the first three numbers (Oct.-Dec. 1773) which are in Roman characters, all three volumes are printed in Gothic type.¹ This novel publication made its first appearance without a word of explanation as to its purpose or plans, nor was the editor's name anywhere given. It was not until the January number of 1774 that the editor addressed his readers. He apologized there for not being able to write Danish well, "least of all suitably to the taste of these enlightened times," as he says;² but he did not give any reason for writing it at all—in other words for publishing his paper in a foreign language. It was not because he sympathized with those few misguided men of his day who actually advocated the adoption of the Danish tongue by the Icelanders; on the contrary, he strongly opposed that suggestion in a later article (vol. III, pp. 81-87), in which he showed how difficult, even impossible, it would be to bring about such a change, at the same time pointing out what a great loss the dropping of Icelandic would be. Through his paper he addressed himself, not to the people at large, but to the educated men and the Danish officials, and that must have been the reason for his choice of medium, as very few of the Danes understood Icelandic. But he may also have followed the example of periodicals in German and French, which were published in Denmark and which were intended for a similar class of people in that country. In this address to his readers the editor also pointed out the difficulty of this journalistic enterprise especially as to news gathering, and drew attention to the impossibility of filling twelve sheets annually with domestic or even foreign news; besides, he complained that the press and its staff were not so well equipped and reliable as was to be

¹ There is some confusion as to the numbering of the volumes and the pagination. All the numbers from Oct. 1773 to Dec. 1774 are counted as "Förste Aargang," while they have three separate page numbers: Oct.-Dec. 1773, pp. 1-48; Jan.-Sept. 1774, pp. 1-144; Oct.-Dec. 1774, pp. 1-48 which is continued in the numbers for Jan.-Sept. 1775, although they are styled "Anden Aargang." For full description of the volumes, see W. Fiske, *Bibl. Not.* IV, 69; V, 50.

² His style abounds in Icelandicisms of all kinds, such as *Baer*, *Vindemand*, *Kjöbemand*, *kiære sig*, etc.

ISLANDSKE
**MAANEDS
 T I D E N D E R**

Fra Octobr. Maaned's Begyndelse 1773,

til

Septembris Udgang 1774.

FÖRSTE AARGANG

for

OCTOBER.

HRAPPSÖE trykte udi det Kongl. allernaadigst.
 nye privilegerede Bogtrykkerie.

Nyheder.

Fra Sönderlandet.

Man hörer her endnu over alt, at baade Hoie og Lave tillægge de vidtberöimte Engelfke höie Herrer BANK og SOLANDER som afvigte Efterhöft, ankom i den Tanke at beføe Landet, et almindeligt Roes for deres HUMANITET og Gavmildhed. Iblandt andet berettes at den Bonde som leedfagede Skibet ind paa Havnefiorden hvor disse Herrer fandt for godt at kaste Anker og forblive nogen Tiid, skal have faaet en anseelig Belønning. Paa Reiffen til det ildsprudende Biærg Hecla skal de med störste Noiagtighed have givet Agt paa alt hvad mærkværdigt forefalt i

A Nat-

The first page of the *Islandske Maaned's Tidender*.

desired.¹ In place of news he proposed therefore to fill the monthly numbers with various essays and articles which, although dry and imperfect, might give the sensible reader something to think about. An examination of the volumes also reveals that only a very small portion of them is filled with what is usually called news. The far larger part is devoted to articles and reports on topics about which the people were especially concerned at that time, such as the trade, which was the burning question of the day. Skúli Magnússon, the editor's uncle, had then for about a quarter of a century fought the trade monopolists, and had at last succeeded in opening the eyes of the Danish government to the harmfulness of the system, and also had aroused his own countrymen to a more concerted opposition against it. Magnús Ketilsson was a staunch supporter of his uncle in this struggle; his articles on the subject were calmly and clearly written, occasionally in the form of a dialogue. The monthly also included much about various other practical questions, such as horticulture, agriculture, farming, and fishing. The editor was a good householder and much interested in the improvement of rural conditions; on his farm he made experiments with plants and various kinds of grain, and he communicated the results in his paper, where he likewise published accounts of the results obtained by other people. Reports on the new industrial and other enterprises he also included. On the whole he sided with the farmer as against the fisherman. There are a few articles on legal topics and decisions of the courts, and in the last volume a summary of new laws and ordinances. Some abuses came in for severe criticism, such as the absurd prejudice against the eating of horse meat (II, pp. 83-96), and the great number of holidays. At times the editor published half-humorous descriptions of contemporary affairs, like the Öxará assembly (Feb. 1774) and the treatment of criminals (March 1774). A few book reviews may be mentioned, but these deal chiefly with the publications of the Hrappsey press. Most of the articles were written by the editor himself, there being only a few contributions from others. Considering the novelty of the enterprise and the difficulties the editor had to

¹ The editor lived at Búðardalur on the mainland, at a considerable distance from Hrappsey. See the notice about misprint, I, p. 144, and also about stories inserted without the editor's knowledge, II, p. 51.

contend with, the *Islandske Maanedes Tidender* is a creditable publication for its time; but it ought to have been published in Icelandic.

The next periodical publication takes us to Copenhagen, where a considerable number of Icelanders always lived. It appears that in the year of 1779, two young Icelandic students, Ólafur Ólafsson¹ and Þórarinn Sigvaldason Liliendal,² conceived the idea of founding a society, the principal aim of which should be to improve the literary taste among the Icelanders by publishing writings in poetry and prose, as well as to spread useful information in other branches of knowledge.³ The plan was submitted to Jón Eiríksson,⁴ who then held a high governmental position and who beyond doubt was the most influential of his countrymen in Copenhagen, besides being one of the most learned of men. He eagerly embraced the plan put before him by the two young men, and henceforth became the leading spirit of the society until his tragic end. The society was formally established on Aug. 30, 1779, under the name of *Hið íslenska Lærdómslistafélag* (The Icelandic Literature Society); later it added the epithet of royal (*konunglegt*) to its name, in pursuance of the royal letter of June 22, 1787.⁵ The by-laws bear the date of Dec. 16, 1779,⁶ and their first paragraph provided that such a society should exist for ever (*um alldr og æfi*) among the Icelandic students at the University. The society was to support all arts and sciences which could be of any consequence to Iceland, in particular those connected with household affairs, handicrafts,

¹ Ólafur Ólafsson (1753-1832) afterwards became professor in the Kongsberg mining school; about him and his writings, see J. B. Halvorsen, *Norsk Forfatter-Lexikon*, IV, pp. 345-346.

² About Liliendal (1755-93), see Nyerup & Kraft, *Alm. Litteratur-Lexicon* p. 345; Bogi Benediktsson, *Sýslumannaæfir*, III, p. 516.

³ See Ól. Ólafsson's own account of the founding of the society, in Sveinn Pálsson, *Æfisaga Jóns Eyríkssonar* 1828, pp. 148-154.

⁴ Jón Eiríksson was born in Iceland Aug. 31, 1728, and died in Copenhagen March 29, 1787. For his life and work, see especially Sveinn Pálsson, *Æfisaga Jóns Eyríkssonar*, Kaupmannahöfn, 1828, 8°, pp. (4) + 187, with portrait; C. W. Brunn, *Til Erindring om Jon Erichsen*, Kjöbenhavn, 1887, 8°, pp. 37; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon*, IV, pp. 535-538; Worm, *Lexicon over lærde Mænd I*, pp. 285-287, III, pp. 195-197, 924; Nyerup & Kraft, *Alm. Litteratur-Lexicon*, pp. 153-154; *The Foreign Quarterly Review* IX, 1832, pp. 59-62.

⁵ See *Rit VIII*, pp. 287-288; *Lögþingisbooken* 1787, pp. 46-47.

⁶ *Ens Íslenska Lærdóms-Lista Felags Skraa*, etc. Copenhagen, 1780, 8°, pp. 51. See also *Nýjar Samþykktir* of April 4, 1787, printed in Copenhagen, 1787, 8°, pp. 15. About various provisions, cf. also *Rit I*, pp. xxxix-xl; VI, p. xxiv; IX, p. xxxvi.



JÓN EIRÍKSSON

the livelihoods of the inhabitants, and the utilisation of the natural resources of the country. The disciplines to which attention should be given were enumerated as follows: natural theology,⁷ philosophy including ethics, natural science, mathematics, and belles-lettres. Especially noteworthy are the provisions concerning the language. In its publications the society was to use the Icelandic tongue, preserve it and purify it of all foreign words and phrases which had crept in; these were to be replaced by new words if no old ones could be found, but words of foreign origin which had been used by the writers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries might be retained. There were three classes of members: ordinary, extraordinary, and honorary. The first managed the society and were required to understand Icelandic; they were to submit to the society every year some writing, original or translated, on the subjects which they were most familiar with. All written contributions were to be passed upon at the meetings; later this was delegated to committees. No royalties seem to have been paid at first, but later a remission of the annual dues was promised those who contributed articles.¹ Regular meetings were held every fortnight; afterwards their number was reduced to one every month;² two extraordinary meetings were held annually. The first printed list of members (1781) enumerates 47 members, of whom 30 were ordinary or regular; in 1787 there were 78, including 38 ordinary; while the last list (1796) gives 127 members, 46 of them ordinary. The presidency was occupied by Jón Eiríksson from the beginning until his death in 1787. Laurits Andreas Thodal³ succeeded him as a president; he was a Norwegian by birth and for many years had been the governor-general of Iceland; thus he was fairly well acquainted with Icelandic affairs, but his knowledge of the language was imperfect. The secretaries were, first Liliendal who served until 1787, then Benedikt J. Gröndal (1787-92), and finally Jón Johnsonius. The first treasurer was Ólafur Ólafsson who held the position

¹ Cf. *Rit* IX, p. xxxvi.

² In the supplementary by-laws of 1787. There it was also provided that the secretary and treasurer should give their reports at the meetings *in Danish*! This doubtless was the effect of Thodal's election as president.

³ Thodal (ca. 1718-1808) was governor-general of Iceland 1770-1785 and discharged his duties better than most of the foreigners who occupied that position. Cf. Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVII, pp. 202-203.

until 1783; Magnús Stephensen served for two years (1785-87), whereafter Hans Jensen, a Dane, was elected, remaining in the office until the end.

The publications of the society began to appear in 1781, under the title of *Rit þess (konunglega) íslenska Lærdómslistafélags*. Annually a small octavo volume was published of some 300 pages, exclusive of the preface and list of members, which were printed at the front of each volume. On the back of the title-page were printed in a line-border the words: "Gudi! Konúnginum! og Föðurlandinu!"—a traditional phrase under the absolute monarchy. Then came a dedication to Prince Frederick, followed by a preface in Icelandic with a Danish translation on the opposite page giving an account of the contents of the volume; this Danish translation was doubtless printed out of consideration for the numerous foreign members. There were published fifteen volumes in all. Their contents are remarkable both as to the variety of subjects treated and as to the quality of the articles.¹ Among the authors were many of the leading men in Iceland at the time; of them one may mention in particular Ólafur Stephensen, the governor-general, Stefán Þórarinnsson, governor of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, Magnús Ketilsson, Bishop Hannes Finnsson, and last but not least Jón Eiríksson, the president; each of these has written several contributions. As to subjects the greatest number of the articles deal with farming and fishing; this was in accordance with Jón Eiríksson's policy of laying principal stress upon practical matters. There are some thirty articles on farming and other things connected with farm life; some dozen on fishing in its various phases; half a score or more on different handicrafts and industries which were or might be carried on in Iceland. With the view of inciting to enterprise, there were printed every year lists of those who had distinguished themselves in these fields and had been awarded prizes or some other kind of recognition by the government and the Danish Agricultural Society. Furthermore there were lists of those subjects on which the society wished to receive articles or to call attention to. Of great interest were the statistical reports on the population by Bishop Hannes and Stefán

¹ The articles were frequently illustrated by plates. Many of these are often lacking in the extant copies. The late Asgeir Torfason, who was a keen observer of books, told me in 1914 that he had never found a copy which contained all the plates. In the Fiske copy great many plates are lacking.

R i t
þess Íslenska
Lærdóms-Lista Felags.



Fyrsta Bindini
fyrir árit MDCCLXXX.



*Est quodam prodire tēnus, si non
datur ultra.*

HORAT. Epist. Lib. I. Ep. I.



Prentað í Kaupmannahöfn,
á kostnað Felagsins,
af Jóhann Rüdolph Ebiele, 1781.

Title-page of vol. i. of the *Rit þess ísl. Lærdómslistafélags*.

Pórarinnsson; and the historical treatises by the former were most valuable. The question of trade was hardly touched upon in this annual; there is only one article which deals directly with it; but that it was thus neglected was apparently because the question had received a temporary solution through the royal ordinance of Aug. 18, 1786, whereby the trade monopoly was abolished and freedom of trade established between Iceland and the other parts of the Danish monarchy.

Of great value in those days were the treatises on medical and sanitary topics, with special reference to conditions in Iceland, by Jón Sveinsson, Sveinn Pálsson, and Jón Pétursson, the leading physicians of the time. Several articles are to be found from the pen of Stefán Björnsson on weights and measures, from physico-mathematical point of view; others on subjects from natural history by Ólafur Olavius, also a translation of A. F. Büsching's elementary text-book of natural history, and two essays on meteorological and celestial phenomena. In the field of humanities there was included a series of articles on the Prophets, correcting and criticizing the Icelandic version of them, by Jón Ólafsson (Hypnonesius); furthermore an abstract of Páll Vídalín's philological and juridical commentary on the *Jónsbók*, a law-code of the thirteenth century; a translation of Plutarch's treatise on the bringing up of children, and some other minor articles. The volumes contain also several poems, original and translated. The former are represented by *Íslands vaka*, a long retrospective poem on Icelandic history, and *Munaðarmál Íslands*, a poem praising the different phases of Icelandic country life, both by Jón Johnsonius, a poet of some merit, but one whose productions usually were obscure and artificial and consequently not good poetical models, although the editors made such a claim for them and bestowed praise on them.¹ Of the translations particular mention deserve those of Pope's *Temple of Fame* by Benedikt J. Gröndal,² and of the first two books of Milton's *Paradise Lost*

¹ Johnsonius (1749–1826) was very active as a member and official of the society. About him see Bogi Benediktsson, *Sýslumannaæfir* II, pp. 242–243; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VIII, p. 549, also the dictionaries of authors by Worm, Nyerup, and Erslew.

² Concerning this translation the editors say (X, pp. xiv–xvi): “Med sannri ánægju höfum vær móttækitt þessari heppnu útleggingu af einu alþecktu meistarastycki, mælir það fyrir henni, at hún er audskilin, nettord, og sýnir at þýðandi hefir vel varit styrkleika sínum í módurmálinu; hvervetna framskína þær trúu hugmyndir hinns enska diktara, geymdar vid ordfimi og meðfædda

by Jón Porláksson;¹ the others are of mediocre or inferior character, many of them from the Danish by Johnsonius.²

The society displayed greatest activity under the presidency of Jón Eiríksson. The finances, however, never were very good, the members being few and the dues small (3 ríxdalir), nor did the publications sell well; government support was therefore necessary. After Jón Eiríksson's death decline gradually set in; there was no one to take his place who exercised such an influence or who possessed his authority, confidence, lively interest, wide knowledge, and ceaseless energy, and the control unfortunately passed to some extent into the hands of foreigners. Besides, there were factions within the society, and the members were in disagreement on many points, the question of whether the seat of the society should be transferred to Iceland being perhaps of greatest consequence. The fifteenth volume was never completed,³ and although the society nominally continued to exist for a number of years, it published nothing subsequent to that volume, and finally the remainder of its publications and its funds were transferred to *Hið íslenska Bókmentafélag*⁴ which in a way may be looked upon as its successor. Yet what it had accomplished during the short period of its active existence will always be remembered; many pages in its publications may still be read with pleasure and profit. They show sincere and intelligent efforts at awakening the people and improving their condition. Not least praiseworthy was the attempt to reform the language; it makes a good impression, although at times one

skáldskapar gáfu útleggiara vors. Svo langt er frá því að oss mislíki, þó Hr. Gröndahl hafi ei bundit sig til studla edr dýrs bragarháttis, at vér þvert ímót óskum, at vor tilkomandi Skáld vildu, ístadinn fyrir að kjaefa meining og andakraft í gautsku klingklangi af einshlióðandi ítrekudum adquædum, slíta af sér öll dárilig, edr óþarflig bönd, er midaldursins vísnasmidir hafa á sig lagt, svo að segia til uppbótar, fyrir þat þeir vildu hafa sig undan því er náttúrliga heimtaz má af einu Skáldi: at yrkia med andagipt og ordheppni."

¹ This translation is from the Danish of J. H. Schönheyder.

² In *The Foreign Quarterly Review* IX, 1832, pp. 53-63, there is an account of the society and its publications, giving a list of the authors and their contributions, but it is unfortunately full of horrible misprints. It was originally written by Finnur Magnússon, and translated from his manuscript by Sir John Bowring.

³ The Fiske copy of vol. XV has only 226 pp. and no title-page or preface. Jón Sigurðsson said that he knew no copy having more than 286 pp. (*Hið ísl. Bókmentafél.* 1816-1866, p. 33).

⁴ See *Hið íslenska Bókmentafélag 1816-1866*, p. 33. Unfortunately most of the papers concerning the Lærdómslistafélag were burned in Copenhagen in 1847.

has to take the will for the deed; such reform was bound to be fumbling in the beginning. The influence of the *Rit* upon the country has been considerable, and now *Gömlu félagsritin*, as they are popularly known, are treasured volumes on Icelandic bookshelves.

There was a growing desire for some literary organization in Iceland, and the necessity of such was felt by many. The *Lærdómslistafélag* did not altogether satisfy people there, especially after Jón Eiríksson's death; many writers were reluctant to send contributions to the publications of the Copenhagen society, because they did not like to submit their writings for criticism or rejection to the young men who sat there in judgment on what was to be printed. After his return to Iceland, Magnús Stephensen¹ soon began to lay plans for a national organization which would meet the wishes of the people, and before long these plans took shape. It was on his initiative that *Hið íslenska Landsuppfærðingarfélag* (The Icelandic Society for National Enlightenment) was founded on July 19, 1794. Among its founders were Stephensen's father and brother, Ólafur Stephensen, the governor-general, and Stefán Stephensen, vice-lawman; the others were Stefán Þórarinsson, Bishop Hannes Finnsson, Rev. Markús Magnússon of Garðar, and Björn Gottskálksson, who was then the owner of the Hráppsey press. The by-laws of the new society were printed in 1796.² Its purpose was to spread knowledge and encourage reading among all classes of the population by publishing good, select works which would instruct as well as entertain. All were invited to become members, both learned and unlearned, men and women, natives and foreigners. The annual dues ranged from ten ríxdalir to one ríxdalur according to the membership one desired. The annual meeting was to be held at Thingvellir on July 19, during the session of the Althing. The management was in the hands of a president and a superintendent, the latter having practically unlimited power as to

¹ Magnús Stephensen was born Dec. 27, 1762, and died March 17, 1833. For his life, see especially *Ný félagsrit* VI, pp. i-xiv (by Jón Sigurðsson) with portr.; *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafélags* IX, pp. 197-298 (fragment of an autobiography); *Sunnansfari* XI, pp. 89-93, with portraits; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVI, pp. 412-416, and the dictionaries of authors by Worm, Nyerup, and Erslew. No biography worthy of this truly great man and patriot has as yet appeared.

² *Samþykktir hins Íslenska Lands-Uppfærðingar Félags*. Leirárgörðum, 1796, 8°, pp. 46. Cf. *Bibl. Not.* V, 63.

the selection of the books which were to be published. Ólafur Stephensen was elected president, while the office of superintendent was filled by Magnús Stephensen. The Hrappey press was placed at the service of the society and was moved from Hrappey to Leirárgarðar, a small farm adjoining the home of the superintendent, who lived at Leirá. This press had hitherto been restricted in its activity because of the privilege enjoyed by the Hólar press of issuing religious works. This privilege was now abrogated and the Hrappey press was permitted to publish such books.¹ A few years later (1799) the Hólar press was abolished and its material brought to Leirárgarðar and united with the press there,² which in the meantime had become the property of the society. The society met with a good reception from the people; the list of members which was printed with the by-laws contains 1024 names from all parts of the country. In the beginning the society was a private organization governed by the founders, but four years later (Oct. 1, 1798) through their action it was made a public institution³ and its name changed to *Íslands Uppfræðingarstíptan*, but the names *Upplýsingarstíptan*, *Vísindastíptan*, and even *Landsupphæðingarfélag* are frequently used after that to designate it. By royal letter of June 27, 1800, it came under royal protection and henceforth used the epithet of royal (*konungleg*).⁴ It was granted certain privileges by the government, such as free transport on the mail and falcon ships of printing materials and other necessities, and an exemption from postage for its letters by the overland mail.⁵

Among the different works which, according to its statutes, the society was to publish, there were "good and instructive narratives, and an account of foreign and domestic events." Pursuant to this there commenced to appear in the year 1796 an annual under the title of *Minnisverð tíðindi*. During the years 1796-99 four numbers or parts were printed in succession, three

¹ Letter of Sept. 13, 1794 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 192-193; *Minnisv. tíð.* I, p. 168).

² Rescript of June 14, 1799 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 374-377; *Minnisv. tíð.* II, pp. 133-134). Privilege of Nov. 8, 1799 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 410-411).

³ *Minnisv. tíð.* II, pp. 134-136; *Minerva*, May 1799, pp. 253-255.

⁴ *Minnisv. tíð.* II, pp. 459-460; *Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 461-462.

⁵ Letter of Nov. 1, 1800 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 486-487; *Minnisv. tíð.* II, pp. 461-462).

Minnisverd Tíðindi

frá Ný-ári 1795
till Þor-daga 1798.

af

Agripi
um þær nýjustu
franska Stjórnarvælingar

Ótrásett

af

Magnúsi Steppensen,
Lögmanni í Norður- og Vestfir. Landam. Íslandi.

I Bindi

Leirárgördum við Leirá, 1796, 1798.
Prentuð að tilhlutun ens Íslandska Lands-Úpps-
fræðingar Félagi, á kostnað Björns
Gottskálkssonar,
af Dótturkjara G. J. Schagfford.

Title-page of vol. i. of the *Minnisverd tíðindi*.

of which form the first volume. Then there was some confusion and delay; the fifth part (the second half of volume two) was not printed until 1806, while in the meantime the first part of volume three had appeared in 1803, a second part being added in 1806; after this the publication was discontinued and the

last volume left unfinished (without title-page and table of contents). The volumes are all in small octavo and vary somewhat as to the number of pages, the first two being of some 500 pages, the third nearly 300 pages. Each part was issued in bluish covers, on which usually was printed a notice from the author or the editor. The first volume and the latter half of the second were written by Magnús Stephensen, the first half of volume two being by Stefán Stephensen,¹ and the third volume by Finnur Magnússon who at that time lived in Iceland. The contents of these volumes represent a record of the events which took place in Iceland and other countries from the beginning of 1795 to the end of 1803; by far the greater portion is devoted to foreign news, as might be expected. As an introduction the first part contains a fairly full account of the French revolution down to 1795. The foreign news, as one of the writers admits, was to a large extent drawn from the Danish monthly *Minerva*. The writers seldom express their individual opinions or sympathies; they seem, however, to look with favor upon the liberal movements of the time; Finnur Magnússon apparently had a strong liking for Napoleon. The story is told as fully as space permitted, is fairly accurate and on the whole is tolerably well set forth, although frequently the presentation suffers from a certain heaviness due to the longwinded, intricate sentences which Magnús Stephensen in particular used and which sound so unnatural in Icelandic, the order of the words often being that of the Danish. But the volumes must have been very welcome to the people, who have always taken great interest in the doings of the world, in spite of their isolation; now for the first time they could read in their own tongue in printed form the history of contemporary events. It is therefore surprising that the annual did not last longer or appear more regularly, and one is inclined to blame the editor. Still those were difficult times in Iceland as elsewhere; money was scarce and books brought little or no profit.

The accounts in the *Minnisverð vöðindi* of Icelandic affairs and events are often quite extensive, although they represent but little variety, as they deal mostly with weather conditions

¹ For life of Stefán Stephensen (1766-1820), see memorial volume published by his elder brother in 1822 (cf. *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.* 1914, p. 554); Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVI, pp. 416-417.

and the like, the hay harvest and the fishing, disasters, and deaths, to which often are added long obituary notices on prominent men, and epitaphs. Then there is always a long list of government appointments, likewise a summary or enumeration of laws and ordinances promulgated during the year. Not to be forgotten are the stories about strange and mysterious happenings which are to be found there. At the end we often find appendices (*fylgiskjöl*) which deal with various things; sometimes these are useful instructions for different occasions, like directions for resuscitating people from drowning, or keeping potatoes from freezing in winter; at other times they are poems, advertisements, or other contributions defending or attacking new books;¹ on occasion we find information for a better understanding of the foreign news. Reports of the Society and lists of members are also to be found there. With the primitive means of communication at that time, news gathering was a troublesome thing in Iceland; the editor had to depend on his friends and government officials in the various parts of the country for information, and he gives a due credit to them for their assistance. Magnús Stephensen had originally intended to include as a part of volume two his history of the eighteenth century in Iceland (*Eptirmæli Átjándu aldar*), and as a matter of fact it had been printed as such with continuous pagination, but before publishing it he very properly decided to issue it as a separate work.

The other provision in the statutes concerning the publication of good and instructive tales and narratives Magnús Stephensen was not slow in fulfilling.² In 1797 there appeared an octavo volume of some 320 pages, called *Skemtileg Vinagleði*, the continuation of which was to follow the next year, provided the first volume was well received. In this the editor presented himself as the advocate of enlightenment in the true eighteenth century style, nor did he spare those who had opposed him. The general public in Iceland had hitherto been accustomed to the reading of old sagas or other similar tales, the popular epic poetry called *rímur*, and to the perusal of the religious works which issued from the Hólar press. Here Magnús Stephensen wished to bring

¹ See *Minnisv. tíð.* I, pp. 334ff.; II, pp. xxii-xxvi.

² Hannes Finnsson's *Qvöld-vökurnar* (1797-98) belongs to this category, but can not be classed among periodical and therefore does not concern us here.



MAGNÚS STEPHENSEN

about a change; he had determined to reform the habits and taste of the people. Their religious views he wished to modify, and especially repugnant to him were many of the expressions commonly used in religious books. He opposed the pietistic tendency which of late had gained ground in Iceland, and he tried to bring the people to more rationalistic ideas in matters of religion. Their reading he was anxious to divert from the old traditional subjects to foreign literatures and to what he considered useful, instructive, and entertaining. His first attempts in these lines had immediately met with strong opposition, especially in the field of religion. In the preface, postscript, and various other places in the *Vinagleði* he explained his aims and described his opponents as they appeared to him. "To instruct and bring joy, to kindle a little light in the darkness, to draw the veil from disgraceful vices, to glorify the majesty and goodness of virtues, and to show how nature sings the Creator's praise"—this, according to his own somewhat pompous words, was his feeble attempt in the *Vinagleði*. He says that he had tried to write the language with taste and neatness, thus avoiding two extremes, the one which indulges in a mixture of foreign tongues and bad grammar, and the other which prides itself on an unnatural and affected style full of neologisms or imitations of the ancients. The poems included in the volume, he says furthermore, had been selected for the purpose of improving the taste for poetry among the people, and intentionally the original metrical form of these poems had in some cases been preserved, although unknown in Icelandic, in order that the foreign airs might be made familiar to the Icelanders.¹ The framework of the book consists of a conversation between four men. Filodemus is the principal character. The other three, Matthias, Kandidus, and Hilaris, have come to his house to seek information and to be entertained. Hilaris seems to be a doubtful character, or he suspects, at least, that he is considered so by the others. It is noteworthy that the names of the *dramatis personæ* are all foreign. Filodemus first delivers a speech on enlightenment, which he

¹ The dedication which follows the preface is as follows:

Veri Vina-Gledi
vænum Bænda-mönnum
eignud Isalanz,
sem med glödu gedi
géfa fróðleik sönnum
heidur, hylli, ans!

Hún Lióss-vinum
holla skémtun líái,
hygginda þeir tign og notin síái,
heilræðanna í Vina-Gledi gái,
gjæfu, þackir, sæmd ad launum fáí!
M. Stephensen.

praises in high terms; then follow stories, historical narratives (Vasco da Gama, etc.) essays on natural subjects (the solar system, etc.), reflections on various topics, poems, and finally a sermon and a hymn.¹ Included we find two of Marmontel's tales, several poems by Gellert, Baggesen and others, translated by different hands. The prose part of the volume, which to a very large extent consists of translations, is written entirely by Magnús Stephensen, from whose pen also come some of the poems. The volume winds up with a "Pro memoria to all men of darkness and haters of light in Iceland," signed by Filodemus, in which the author addresses his opponents in very strong terms. The defiant character of the book doubtless made it very unpopular in certain quarters, and probably for that reason no more was published.

But Magnús Stephensen was undaunted. The next year (1798) saw another publication of his on similar lines. This was *Margvislegt Gaman og alvara*,² an octavo volume of 176 pages. In a note on the cover he announced that he intended to publish a part of this work every year.³ This plan he did not carry out; the second and last part was finally issued in 1818, in the preface to which the editor declared that the first part had been sold out in a short time. These two parts were to form volume one, and a title-page was to be printed, if a sufficient number of subscribers ordered it; apparently this was never done; I know at least no copy with such a title-page. He said furthermore that paper and printing were then so expensive that only a goodly number of subscribers would make possible the continuation. We may presume that these were not forthcoming. The two

¹ The first verse of this hymn has often been misquoted and misunderstood. It runs thus:

Alfadir! hvörn um aldir allar,
áttir himins og jardar her,
vilttir, helgir, vísir ákalla,

vor Gud! Jehóva! Júppítur!
alls völdug orsök, æ lofud,
óransakanleg, Drottinn Gud!

² For a description of it, see *Bibl. Not.* I, 98 and 106.

³ On the cover is also printed a poem by Jón Espólin in praise of enlightenment, addressed to Magnús Stephensen. The first and fifth stanzas run as follows:

Heidur veri þeim, sem þjóðum
Þæga vill upplýsing fá,
Sá með stórum, sá með góðum
Sannarlega teljast má;
Sá vill Föðurlandi lýsa,
Leida vanvits burtu ský;
Þann skulum allir, allir þrísá,
Andinn sem að frjáls er í.

Upplýsingu stórum stundar
Stephensen! á vorri tíð;
Haldt því fram til fremstu stundar,
Fá skalt lof af hyggnum lýd;
Þacka skal þjer þessi vísa,
Þyck sem vanvits rífur ský;
Þig skulum allir, allir þrísá,
Andinn sem að frjáls er í.

parts of the *Gaman og alvara* are attractive and deal with a variety of subjects. They include numerous poems, mostly translations from Frankenaue, Gellert, Horace, Thaarup, and others, by Jón Þorláksson, Jón Espólin, Þorvaldur Þóðvarsson, etc.; several tales and stories rendered into Icelandic by different hands, such as Hallgrímur Scheving, Jón Jónsson (lector), and the editor; three essays on legal topics, at least one of them by the editor, the other two being signed by pseudonyms; treatises on medical subjects by Oddur Hjaltalín and Sveinn Pálsson; a brief history of the Reformation by Rev. Árni Helgason; articles on iron and steel, and alcoholic beverages by the editor, and so on. The aggressive spirit of the *Vinagleði* is absent from this publication.

Magnús Stephensen has always been held largely responsible for the royal letter of June 7, 1800, which abolished the old Althing at Thingvellir, and for the subsequent ordinance of July 11, 1800, which established the National Superior Court (*Landsyfírréttur*) in Reykjavík.¹ The court was organized in the following year and Magnús Stephensen became its presiding officer.² In this capacity he edited from time to time, at the expense of the court, announcements and proclamations from government officials, which had been read in the court, as well as a few royal letters and ordinances which had been promulgated there. These publications were without a title but had continuous numbers (Nos. 1-5) and pagination (52 pp.) and were printed at intervals during the years 1806-09.³ They seem sometimes to have been included under the name of Magnús Stephensen's *Tilskipanasafn*, but that is not really an appropriate title for them and belongs to other publications from the same source.⁴

The Napoleonic wars caused distress in Iceland, as all imports were greatly reduced. There was very little printing done during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, mainly because supplies were not obtainable. The second decade, however, is of great interest to us in this connection, not only on account of a few periodicals which were published, but because

¹ See *Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 445-447, 464-473.

² For his address when the court was opened, see *Minnisv. tð.* II, pp. viii-xxii.

³ See *Bibl. Not.* V, 80. The Fiske Collection has not the first two numbers.

⁴ Cf. *Bibl. Not.* I, 103 and 109; V, 102-103. *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.*, p. 342.

the foundations were then laid for a further literary progress. It opens with the publication of the first Icelandic grammar of consequence, from the pen of Rasmus Christian Rask, the Danish philologist; this was soon followed by other important philological researches of his into the history and nature of the Old Norse or Icelandic tongue, by which the study of the language and its literature was placed on a scientific basis.¹ Down to that time the lack of such knowledge had made the attempts towards a literary and linguistic reform unsuccessful.

In 1815 the Icelandic Bible Society was founded through the efforts of Rev. Ebenezer Henderson, the Scotch divine. Connected with his visit to Iceland is also the foundation of *Hið íslenska evangelíska Smábókafélag* (The Icelandic Evangelical Tract Society). Its founder was Rev. Jón Jónsson,² minister of the Grund parishes in Eyjafjörður. It was, of course, modeled upon similar societies abroad, and thanks to Henderson it became the recipient of some support from the Religious Tract Society which had been established in London in 1799. A prospectus was circulated throughout the Northern Province in 1815, and some 700 subscribers were obtained. The plan was to print ten sheets (160 pages) every year. It is to be noted that this movement was confined almost entirely to the North of Iceland. The reasons for this, I believe, are to be sought, not only in the fact that the founder lived there, but more particularly in a certain antagonism between the North and the South. Whether the Northlanders on the whole were more religious or more attached to the earlier traditions in matters of religion than the Southlanders, I shall not attempt to decide. But they were very dissatisfied with the changes which had of late been brought about. They had all at once been deprived of the see, the cathedral school, and the press, and they felt the loss keenly. They blamed Magnús Stephensen and his followers for this, and certain it is that the tendencies in letters and religion which found expression in many of the publications of the *Landsuppfræðingarfélag* met

¹ For an account of the earlier Icelandic grammars and an estimate of Rask's works by Dr. Björn M. Ólsen, see *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafél.* IX, 1888, pp. 39ff.

² Jón Jónsson was born Aug. 4, 1759, and died Sept. 4, 1846. For his life, see *Verði ljós* II, 1897, pp. 12-15, 29-32, 45-48; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* I, pp. 796-797, Supplem. I, p. 970; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VIII, pp. 549-550.

with little response among the Northlanders. Rev. Jón Jónsson was one of the severest critics of some of the new books on religion, especially of the new hymn-book,¹ and his aim in founding the Tract Society was doubtless to counteract more effectively the rationalism which emanated from the South. The Society was supported by voluntary contributions from its members, but they seemingly never amounted to very much, and the grant from the London society was its principal source of income, besides what the sale of the tracts brought. These were published in small octavo numbers under the title of *Rit þess íslenska evangeliska Smábókafélags* (popularly known as *Smárit*); the printing could not begin in 1815 as had been planned, because on account of the war nothing was then printed in Iceland,² and the first tract was printed in Copenhagen in 1816. They seem to have appeared regularly during the first years, but afterwards they were issued at irregular intervals; they were as a rule printed in Copenhagen, only a few bearing the imprint of the Icelandic press. The by-laws were printed in Copenhagen in 1818,³ and a circular about the purpose and activities of the Society was probably printed in the following year,⁴ when also a financial report was issued; another report bears the date of 1821. At the death of the founder and president in 1846, sixty-seven numbers had been published, but there appeared thirteen more, making the total number of eighty, the last one having the imprint of Copenhagen, 1854. The tracts were almost all translations of foreign tracts; only a few original contributions are to be found among them, chiefly hymns and other religious poems. Most of the translations were made by the founder. What impression these tracts made upon the people I am unable to say, but they probably were not without some influence. They have now become scarce, at least in complete sets.⁵

¹ See extracts from his letter on the hymn book, dated May 12, 1821, in *Verði ljós* I, 1896, pp. 195-199.

² Cf. *Rit*, No. 16, p. 9.

³ *Vidtektir þess íslenska evangeliska smárita-félags*. Kaupmannahöfn, 1818, 8°, pp. 3.

⁴ *Um uppruna, augnamid og framgáing hinna andlígu smárita-félaga yfir höfud og þar nærst þess íslenska sérilagi*. N. p., n. d., but probably printed in 1819, 8°, pp. 16.—See also about the society, Jens Möller's article in *Theologisk Bibliothek* XIX, 1821, pp. 304-334; *Sunnanpósturinn* II, pp. 94-96.

⁵ The Fiske Collection has a complete set. Cf. *Bibl. Not.* VI, 134.

In 1816 *Hið íslenska Bókmentafélag* (The Icelandic Literary Society) was founded on the initiative of Rasmus Christian Rask and Rev. Árni Helgason. Its purpose was "to support and maintain the Icelandic language and literature, and the civilization and honor of the Icelandic nation, by the publication of books or by other means as circumstances would permit." It consisted of two sections, one in Reykjavík, the other in Copenhagen, the latter being by far the more productive of the two; as a matter of fact the first book issued by the former was not printed until 1849. This division existed until 1911, when the society permanently established its headquarters in Reykjavík. This is not the place to dwell upon the history of the society which has for more than a century been one of the important factors in the intellectual life of the Icelandic nation, especially as recently there has been published a very full historical account of it.¹ We are only concerned here with its activities so far as they come within the sphere of periodical literature. In the first by-laws of the society there is to be found the following paragraph (Chap. i., art. 4): "The society shall publish each book separately, but no collective works which are to be continued every year, except news leaflets which are to contain the principal news about political affairs, noteworthy events, economical conditions, commerce, and literature both at home and abroad; no Icelandic book, however, must be praised there or found fault with, but its contents only given briefly; on the other hand, it is considered appropriate to express one's opinion about books in other languages which people in Iceland later can form their own judgment about."² This clearly shows that literary criticism in Iceland was at that time in a precarious state, and that the society wished to steer clear of all controversy and keep aloof from the different factions. In conformity to this provision the Copenhagen section issued, in the spring of 1817, the first part of the *Íslensk sagnablöð*, in 300 copies, and sent it to Iceland to be distributed free among the members, while it was sold to others. The first part contained a summary of foreign news from 1804, where the *Minnisverð*

¹ *Hið íslenska Bókmentafélag 1816-1816. Minningarrit aldarafmælisins 15. ágúst 1916.* Reykjavík, 1916, 4°.—On the fiftieth anniversary was published *Hið íslenska Bókmentafélag. Stofnan félagsins og athafnir þess fyrstu fimm tíu árin 1816-1866.* Kaupmannahöfn, 1866, 4°.

² *Lög hins íslenska Bókmentafélags.* Kaupmannahöfn, 1818, p. 6.

tíðindi had stopped, down to the spring of 1817, and for ten years (until 1826) these small quarto parts were issued every spring and sent with the early merchantmen to the different

Nr. I.

1816.

Í s l e n z k
S A G N A B L Ö D

útgæfin af því Íslenska Bókmentafélagi.

Svo að almenníngi á Íslandi ei séu að öllu leiti ókunnugar þær merkiligustu biltíngar er skéd hafa utanlans frá endíngu þeirra Íslensku tíðinda, er prentað voru í Leir-árgörðum, (eðr frá nýari 1804) til uppbyrjunar þefsara að nýu, vilium vér leitast við að leida þær í líos á stytta hátt er ordid gètr, og byrium þannig með:

Fránkaríki. Árid 1804 lét Napóleón Bónaparte velia sig til Frænkismanna kefsara og skömmu eptir konungs í Vallandi (Itakú), og síálfr. þáíinn var víðsláðr krýnsíngu hans. Það mikla stríð víð Englanð sem árinu áðr hafði brotizt út að nýu, varð nú skélífligra enn fyrr, þær nær því allar veraldarinnar þjóðir urdu, hvör éptir aðra, að eiga þátt í því, vilíugar eða nauðugar. Fyrst snerust Þýzka lánz og Rúslánz keisarar, auk margra annara minniháttar fursta, móf Frökkum, sem þó þáðu styrk af ýmsum þýzkum þjóðum, og varð þeirra hlutr dritígari. V í en var inntekin af þeim um haufíð 1805, en fullkomnum sígri hrófudu þeir yfir Austurríkísum og Rúsum víð Aust er litz þann 2 desbr., og neydu þá til frídrafamíngs í Presborg þann 27. í. m. þá Austurríki misti nokkur lönd. 1806 stofnadi Bónaparte af ýmsum þýzkum furstum híð svo kallada Rínanar-samband, að hvör foríngia og síðrara hann gíordi

síálfan síg, og kollvarpadi þannig því af-gamla Þýzka eðr ívonefnda heilaga rómverfska ríki, hvörs fyrrverandi keisari þadanaf einúngis nefndi síg keisara af Austurríki.

Um haufíð 1806 kvíknadi stríðid að nýu á Nordrálfunnar meginlandi, fyrst millum Frakka og Prússa. Þeir síðast nefndu hlutu hræparlígna skada, eínkum í bardaganum víð Jena þann 18da október, og innan óríkamma tíma var höfudstadrínn, Berlín, og mestre hluti hins prússíska ríkis í Frænskra valdi. Um sama bíl urdu Rúfsar fíandmenn Frakka, en þeim var ei heldre neitt ágeíngt, þángadtil meginher þeirra var yfirbugaðr víð Fríðland þann 14da júní 1807. Þá vopna-hlé komst á, og þann 9da júlí algíörð fríðr í Tíllít, þá Prússa kóngur misti fræk-an helmíng lenda síns, er Bónaparte skípti að egin þótta millum frénda og vís, en annann helmíng Prússaríkis vaktadi hann síálfr sér í þarfir, með frönsku herlídi, er hafði öll umráð þeirra sterkuftu kastala í löndjnu.

Áðr hafði Bónaparte (1805) rekíd Ferdínand konúng 4da úr Neapólís til Síkíleyar hans annara kóngsríkis, hvar: flotar enskra vörðu hann að mestu. Kóngsríkíd Neapólís gaf hann fyrst bróður sínum Jósef, en hafði skömmu

The first page of the first part of the *Íslensk sagnablöd* (2d ed.; reduced.)

ports of Iceland. The parts were later collected into two volumes, each volume comprising five annual parts (*deildir*) which varied as to length anywhere from some 30 to 60 pages, each page being divided into two columns. The first part soon

ran out of print and a new edition was printed in 1826. The news, both foreign and domestic, during all these years was written by Finnur Magnússon¹ who had recently been made professor in the University of Copenhagen. There is, however, to be found in the second part a long contribution from Bjarni Thorsteinsson and Rev. Árni Helgason dealing with events in Iceland from 1804 to 1817, including a detailed account of the famous Jørgensen episode of 1809. With the 1820 issue the Icelandic portion was suppressed because, as the author stated, domestic news could be found in *Klausturpósturinn*, but the *Sagnablöð* continued to give an account of literary activities among Icelanders in Copenhagen. All this was written in the peculiar, stiff style of Finnur Magnússon, and it does not always make easy reading. In the *Sagnablöð* were also published the annual reports of the society, lists of members, and besides a few obituary poems, epitaphs, and other poems written for special occasions. The *Sagnablöð* doubtless found favor with the reading public in Iceland,² and as will be shown below, they have been continued practically down to the present day under a different name.

In the same year as the Icelandic Literary Society was founded, the Leirárgarðar press was moved to Beitistaðir, where it remained until the summer of 1819, when it was transferred to Viðey. At Beitistaðir was printed the first year and half of the second year of a new periodical called *Klausturpósturinn*, the title of which was derived from the name of the residence of its publisher and editor, Magnús Stephensen. He had taken up his abode at Viðey in 1813, where in Catholic times there had been a monastery of the Augustine order, and hence the place was usually called Viðeyjarklaustur. *Klausturpósturinn* was to appear monthly in small octavo numbers of sixteen pages, closely printed in Gothic type. In this form it was continued for nine years (1818-26), the last volume, however, being issued as an annual.³ It was not a profitable enterprise for its editor and he

¹ Finnur Magnússon was born Aug. 27, 1781, and died Dec. 24, 1847. For his life, see especially *Ný félagsrit* IV, 1844, pp. i-xii (by Jón Sigurðsson), with portrait; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* II, pp. 204-215, Supplem. II, pp. 304-306; *Øversigt over det Kgl. danske Videnskabernes Selskabs Forhandlinger* 1850, pp. 59-67; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XI, pp. 57-63.

² So Jón Sigurðsson states in the 1866 memorial volume, pp. 26-27 (cf. the 1916 memorial volume, pp. 43-44). The opposite is claimed by Jón Guðmundsson in *Pjóðólfur* XIV, 1862, p. 82.

³ For description of the volumes, see *Bibl. Not.* I, 107.

Klaustur-Pósturinn

Kostadur og útsendur af
Magnúsi Stephensen,
Conferenceraði og Jústitiario í Íslands
konúnglega Landsþingrettii.

No. I.

Janúarius 1818.

Prentadur að Beitistjóðum, af Bálfrí og
Bókþrygkara G. J. Schagfjörd.

Gledilegt Ár! góðir Landsmenn!

Um betrar skambegi hylkst meiri partur þeirrar lífandi náttúru hljóður, og sem agndosa. Þmisleg dýr, fuglar og stidquikindi hverfa; liggja sem í nockurskonar dái, eda svo þúngum sofsni, að hana lífjast má við dauda. Græs og aldimi allteins, unð daginn byrtir og sólargangurinn tognar á hverjum degi um það lánga Senuset, er almenningur midar dagsaulann við. En — nú er nockud fram yfir Xlétár komid. Slambegis dymma og þau laungu og leidindafullu náttmyrtra, sofsuþunga og boda: dægur náttúrunnar, taka þoi að stytast, að byrtast upp, að lada og undirbúa allt hvað lífs er, mena, þepnur, quikindi og jardarinnar sofnada

Kl. Póst. Iti Arg.

The first page of *Klausturþósturinn*.

frequently complained of the burden it was on his shoulders both financially and otherwise;¹ at the end of the fourth year he offered to hand it over to any one who was willing to continue it, but there apparently was no one forthcoming. This first monthly in the Icelandic language was far superior to its Hrapps-ey predecessor, and it was for a long time looked upon by the people as one of their best periodicals.² The subject matter in the nine volumes is of great variety. The news from home³ and from abroad fills a considerable space. Particularly prominent in the contents are the abstracts or summaries of new laws and ordinances,⁴ and the decisions of the Superior Court. This was the only way of bringing such things before the public, as no other provisions were made by the government for their publication in a general way, and they must also often have provided welcome filling for the overburdened editor. Many treatises and short articles were published there on farm and household problems, the editor being much interested in subjects of that kind; a series of *búskapar-hugvekjur* from his own pen runs through all nine volumes. Oddur Hjaltalín contributed many articles on medical and sanitary topics. Then there are to be found there several essays on different matters, imitative, as it sometimes seems, of the English eighteenth century essays; it is noticeable that they often have as mottoes or include in the text quotations from the writings of English authors. They were written by the editor himself and generally were published as a greeting from him to his readers at the beginning of a new year. A number of poems were printed in the pages of this periodical, some of them excellent, as those by Sveinbjörn Egilsson, Bjarni Thorarensen, and others. Those written by the editor, and they are many, form a class by themselves; they are usually interesting as far as the subject is concerned, but the

¹ "Eptir því sem næst hefir komizt, þá mun upplag Klausturpóstsins vart hafa farið framúr 700, en naumlega gengið út nema nál. 600 mest, og er þá auðsætt, að vart hefir hafzt upp prentunar og pappírskostnaður auk heldur neitt fyrir ritlaun, fyrirhöfn og útsendingu." *Þjóðólfrur* XIV, 1862, p. 82.

² See *Ný tíðindi* 1852, No. 7, p. 25; *Íslendingur* I, 1860, p. 122.

³ "Peir, sem girnast tilfallandi merkis vidburða, um hvörja eg annars seint fæ öðlast áreidanlega vissu, úr fjarlægum landsplátzum, getid í Klausturpóstinum, umbidjast ad senda hingad, mér kostnadarlaust, stutta, en fullvissa ávisun þar um." *Klausturpósturinn* I, p. 48.

⁴ Some of these were not selected with proper criticism according to Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf*, 1911, pp. 365-367.

form and the language frequently leave much to be desired; Magnús Stephensen's poetic vein was more a product of cultivation than a true natural gift. Many epitaphs likewise saw the light there, but they represented doubtless a very small portion of those sent to the editor from various parts of the country; he had time and again to warn people that only good ones would be included; others had to be paid for if they were to be printed at all. A few advertisements may be found in these numbers, but not enough to help much in defraying the expenses of publication.

After the starting of *Klausturpósturinn* Magnús Stephensen published in the year 1822 *Útvaldar smásögur, almenningi til fróðleiks og skémtunar*, which were to be issued now and then, and therefore must be classed as a periodical. The second part appeared in the following year,¹ but the third, which was to complete the volume, never was printed. This was a publication on the same lines as the *Vinagleði* and *Gaman og alvara*. The two parts contain besides a few historical stories or anecdotes, a long article on Socrates, an account of Willem Bontekoe's voyage to the East Indies, the story of Gustavus Adolphus and Valves, a long essay on Peter the Great, czar of Russia, based upon Voltaire's work and other sources and written by the editor himself—on the whole good and interesting reading. With these two periodicals practically came to an end Magnús Stephensen's long and meritorious publishing activity. In 1826 attacks were made in Danish newspapers upon his management of the *Landsuppfræðingarfélag* which were soon followed by others from one of his own countrymen.² This led to an investigation which finally resulted in a decree that the society had

¹ For description of the two parts, see *Bibl. Not.* IV, 108.

² A contemporary (Finnur Magnússon) writes on this affair as follows: "Would we could report the continued activity of the Icelandic press, but, as we have hinted above, it is sleeping a long, dull sleep, and for the present we see no signs of its awakening. Literature is involved in litigation; vexations, delays, expenses are the present portion of those whose better part it were to follow the peaceful pursuits of literature. A fierce battle is at this moment raging between two separate factions. Crimination and recrimination are the order of the day, and amidst the howling winds, the eternal snows, the volcanoes and the earthquakes of Iceland, the voice of bitter controversy may be heard—the filching of good names—the slander whose tongue is sharper than the sword—the jealousy 'whose eyes are fierce as the sea monster'—and 'the hubble, bubble, toil and trouble,' which omnipresent witches stir up in the cauldron of human passions all over the world." *The Foreign Quarterly Review* IX, 1832, pp. 67–68.

ceased to exist and that the Viðey press was public property and should therefore be under the control of the government.¹ It was, however, rented to Magnús Stephensen, who managed it until his death in 1833. Because of all this his last years were embittered and he felt disappointed over the results of his work. He was doubtless often arbitrary and domineering, thus challenging people to oppose his plans and reforms. He had devoted all his industry and wide knowledge to the service of his country, but he often thought that this was but little appreciated. His influence was transitory, which was due to the character of his work. He had wished to direct new currents into the life of the nation; but he did not realize that most importations only bear fruit when they are grafted on the stock of national culture and traditions; this Magnús Stephensen failed fully to understand, like so many of the eighteenth century men. His work consequently formed no solid foundation upon which future generations could construct on national lines. Nevertheless he will always be counted among the great men of his country. If he did not build, he paved the way and opened new vistas.

At the meeting of the Copenhagen section of the Icelandic Literary Society on April 3, 1827, it was decided to change the name of the *Íslensk sagnablöð* to that of *Skírnir*, and for the sake of convenience to reduce the size from quarto to small octavo; from 1855 this was again changed to large octavo. Thus came into existence the periodical which has had the longest life of all Icelandic periodicals, and is now in its ninety-second year.² From the beginning down to 1904 it preserved always virtually the same character, being an annual record of foreign events, to which as a rule was appended some additional matter. In accordance with the provisions in the by-laws of the society which were quoted above, the first volume of the *Skírnir* contained a list of the principal books published during 1826 in Denmark, by Þorgeir Guðmundsson. This was an innovation which became a permanent feature in all the successive volumes; later (from 1866) was added a list of the more noteworthy books published in Sweden and Norway. With the exception of the list for 1830 (vol. iv.) there was no criticism or analysis of the books included. With the volume for 1867 there was introduced a

¹ Government letter of Oct. 1, 1831 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* IX, pp. 790-793).

² For the history of *Skírnir*, see *Hild Isl. Bókmenntafélag 1816-1916*, pp. 44-45.

SKÍRNIR,
 NÝ TÍÐINDI
 HINS ÍSLENZKA
 BÓKMENTAFÉLAGS.

FYRSTI ÁRGANGR,
 er nær til sumarmála 1827.

Rísta ró, Skírnir!
 og Skekkils blakki
 hleypu til Fróns með fróttu:
 af mánnum og mentum
 segðu mættum haldum,
 og bið þú að virða vel.

KAUPMANNAHÖFN, 1827.
 Prentaðr hjá 'Harðvíg Friðrek Popp.

Title-page of vol. i. of the *Skírnir*.

list of Icelandic books published during the year—a most desirable addition, as these were nowhere else recorded. Later there was included a list of foreign books dealing with Iceland and the Icelandic or Old Norse literature; but no analysis of these was

made either. The Copenhagen section suggested in 1839 that reviews or criticisms of Icelandic books should be published in the *Skírnir*, but the Reykjavík members strongly opposed this and the matter was dropped. With the *Skírnir* there have from the first been issued the reports of the society (minutes of the meetings, financial statements, lists of members); from 1840 on these usually had a separate pagination, and for some years (1859-85) they were even issued in separate covers under the title of *Skýrslur og reikningar*. The first year of the *Skírnir* was written by Finnur Magnússon, but after that there have been different writers. The writer for the coming year was usually elected at the annual meeting of the society, and hence they changed frequently.¹ As might be expected, the different volumes vary considerably as to style, exposition, and presentation of the subject, according to the taste and ability of the writer; but on the whole the society was successful in its choice of writers, and the annual throughout these many years has been popular with the reading public in Iceland, which looked forward to a volume from Copenhagen every spring with the early ships. In the presentation of the subject, one will notice in the earlier volumes a puristic struggle in dealing with foreign words and names which sometimes was carried to extremes; in some volumes these names are either translated or modified so as to give them an Icelandic appearance, or they are all put in quotation marks, which looks clumsy.² But gradually the writers emancipated themselves from these exaggerated notions. Usually only political news and other items of general character were recorded, it being an exception when literary events were mentioned. Icelandic news was included only in 1870 when *Fréttir frá Íslandi* were published in the same volume. In the earlier volumes are occa-

¹ The authors of the volumes for 1827-74 were as follows: Finnur Magnússon, 1827; Þórður Jónasson, 1828-29, 1831-35; Baldvin Einarsson, 1830; Konráð Gíslason and Jónas Hallgrímsson, 1836; Jón Sigurðsson and Magnús Hákonarson, 1837; Magnús Hákonarson, 1838; Brynjólfur Pétursson, 1839-41, 1843; Jón Pétursson, 1842; Gunnlaugur Þórðarson, 1844-45, 1847, 1849-51; Grímur Thomsen, 1846; Gísli Magnússon and Halldór Kr. Friðriksson, 1848; Jón Guðmundsson, 1852; Arnljótur Ólafsson and Sveinn Skúlason, 1853; Sveinn Skúlason, 1854; Arnljótur Ólafsson, 1855-60; Guðbrandur Vigfússon, 1861-62; Eiríkur Jónsson, 1863-72; and Björn Jónsson 1873-74.

² This is most conspicuous in the volumes shortly before and after 1840; especially noticeable in 1836. To mention only a few of these translations or modifications of names: Robert Peel, is called Hróbjartur Píll; Lord John Russell, Jón Hrísil; Portugal is rendered Hafnarland, etc.

sionally to be found poems or other items which the writer or the editor found worth recording. In 1890 the Reykjavík section took over the publication of the *Skírnið*, and in 1905 it was changed into a quarterly magazine of miscellaneous contents.

The two Cathedral Schools at Skálholt and Hólar which had been established after the introduction of the Reformation shared the fate of the sees with which they were connected. The Skálholt School, in accordance with the ordinance of April 29, 1785,¹ was transferred to Reykjavík, which at that time was a small trading station. By a later ordinance, of Oct. 1, 1801,² the Hólar see and school were abolished. The Latin School, or College—as it might be called hereafter, remained in Reykjavík until 1805, when for certain reasons it was moved to Bessastaðir,³ the old seat of the governors-general. There it remained until 1846,⁴ when it was brought back to Reykjavík, where it has been located ever since. Down to 1828 no publications had been issued under the auspices of the Cathedral Schools or the College. At the suggestion of the Icelandic authorities it was ordered on Sept. 8, 1827,⁵ that the College should celebrate the king's birthday, which in the reign of Frederick the Sixth fell on Jan. 28, and in connection with that celebration it should issue a program "suitable to awaken the Icelanders' patriotism as Danish citizens, as well as to encourage scholarship among the teachers in the school." Thus was introduced into Iceland a custom which had been practised for a long time in Denmark, and henceforth was observed with a few interruptions by the Icelandic school until 1895. An ordinance of Sept. 14, 1839,⁶ directed that the program be accompanied by a report of the College for the year, and a letter of Dec. 5, 1840,⁷ that the program thereafter should be issued as an invitation to attend the annual examinations which took place towards the end of May. Later, after the transfer of the College to Reykjavík, the date of the examinations was changed

¹ *Lovs. f. Isl.* V, pp. 182-187.

² *Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 530-531.

³ *Lovs. f. Isl.* VI, pp. 680-681 (Sept. 18, 1804), 752-755 (May 18, 1805).

⁴ Cf. ordinances of June 7, 1841 and April 24, 1846 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* XII, pp. 110-135; XIII, pp. 389-414).

⁵ *Lovs. f. Isl.* IX, pp. 208-209.

⁶ *Lovs. f. Isl.* XI, pp. 392-393.—The first printed report is for the year 1840-41.

⁷ *Lovs. f. Isl.* XI, pp. 710-711.

to the end of June,¹ and some time afterwards it was ordered that the program be issued in Icelandic and Danish;² but this was never observed so far as the program itself was concerned; and soon it was decided³ that only the report should be printed with a Danish translation on the opposite page, an arrangement which was followed from 1847 to 1873, when it was discontinued at the request of Jón Porkelsson.⁴ The programs were issued from 1828 to 1840 under the title of *Skólaháttíð*, etc., or, if they were in Latin, as a few of them were, *Solemnia academica*, etc.; thereafter until 1851 under the title of *Boðsrit*, etc., but since that time they appeared under their individual titles. They were as a rule distributed gratuitously; occasionally, however, they seem to have been offered for sale.⁵ As time went on the program and the report were printed during the summer vacation and issued at the opening of the College in the beginning of October. In 1895 the Althing withdrew the appropriation for publishing a program, or as it was styled "a scientific treatise to accompany the school report," giving the amount hitherto granted for that purpose, to Dr. Jón Porkelsson, then retiring as rector, for lexicographical work, and on his death it was dropped. It is to be deplored that the legislative body should thus abolish a time-honored custom which always had been observed to the credit of the institution.

The programs were from the beginning of high quality and have always been the work of one of the teachers.⁶ They have mainly been of a philological character, either editions of old Icelandic poems, or commentaries on the stanzas and poems in the sagas, or lexicographical works, or the like. A few of the early ones, written by Björn Gunnlaugsson, dealt with mathematics and astronomy, and one contained a teleological poem by him (*Njóla*). Especially worth mentioning is Sveinbjörn Egilsson's prose translation of the *Odyssey*, the first part of which

¹ See "Forelöbigt Reglement for den lærde Skole i Reykjavík," May 30, 1846 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* XIII, pp. 435-463).

² Letter of Dec. 7, 1847 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* XIII, pp. 774-775).

³ Letter of July 24, 1849 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* XV, pp. 324-325, cf. also letter of April 28, 1849 (*ibid.* pp. 256-257)).

⁴ *Vikverji*, No. 44, 1874, pp. 7-8.

⁵ *Pjóðólfur* I, pp. 49-50.

⁶ A review and list of the programs down to 1870, by Konrad Maurer, was printed in *Germania* XVI, 1871, pp. 442-449.

appeared in 1829, and which was finally completed in 1840. It was in a sense an epoch-making publication in the history of Icelandic letters, as it was the forerunner of the renaissance in the language and literature of Iceland which will be referred to below. Never before in recent times had so elegant Icelandic prose been seen in print, and it revealed to outsiders a new tendency within the school. Icelandic was not one of the disciplines taught there; hence direct instruction in reading and writing the language was not given, but of late it had been given indirectly, and effectively at that, as some of the pupils later showed. This indirect method was especially practised by Sveinbjörn Egilsson, who insisted upon that his pupils translate the classics into good and correct Icelandic. His translation of the *Odyssey* gives us an indication of what he required of his pupils. He later brought out a good edition of the *Snorra Edda* with the treatises. During the rectorship of Bjarni Johnsen (Jónsson) the publishing of programs was for many years neglected, and that caused considerable dissatisfaction and was frequently criticized in the press.¹ Although a good administrator and disciplinarian, he appears not to have encouraged productive scholarship, and the few programs published during his tenure of office were written by other teachers. Some of his reports, however, were longer than those of his predecessors and successors, and in them he often discussed at length various educational questions. During the rectorate of Jón Porkelsson all the programs were from his learned and industrious pen.²

¹ See *Nordri* V, 1857, p. 51.—Cf. also *Pjóðólfur* XV, pp. 40–43 (review of the report for 1861–62); reply, signed $x + r$, in *Íslendingur* III, pp. 133–136; rejoinder in *Pjóðólfur* XV, pp. 67–68, 70–71 (cf. 82–83), to which an answer was published as supplement to *Íslendingur* III, No. 23, pp. 4.—*Pjóðólfur* XVI, pp. 21–23, 45–46, 50–52, 79–80, 100–103, 106–107 (review of the report for 1862–63).

² A full list of the programs is as follows: 1828, *Regulas quasdam simpliciores ad computandum motum lunæ*, by Björn Gunnlaugsson; 1829–30, 1835, 1838–40, *Homeri Odyssea*, translated by Sveinbj. Egilsson; 1831, *Hugsvinnsmál*, ed. by Hallgr. Scheving; 1832, *Ólafs drápa Tryggvasonar*, by Hallfréðr Vandræðaskáld, ed. by Svbj. Egilsson; 1833, *Brot af Placidus-drápu*, ed. by Svbj. Egilsson; 1834, *De mensura et delineatione Islandiæ interioris*, by Björn Gunnlaugsson; 1836, *Töðlur yfir sólarinnar sýnilega gang á Íslandi*, by Björn Gunnlaugsson; 1837, *Forspjallslíðp*, ed. by Hallgr. Scheving; 1842, *Njóla*, by Björn Gunnlaugsson; 1843 and 1847, *Íslenskir málshættir*, collected and ed. by Hallgr. Scheving; 1844, *Fjögur gömul kvæði*, ed. by Svbj. Egilsson; 1845–46, *Leiðarvísir til að þekkja stjörnur*, by Björn Gunnlaugsson; 1848–49, *Edda Snorra* with the treatises, ed. by Svbj. Egilsson; 1851, *Tvö brot af*

In 1828 two Icelanders in Copenhagen, Baldvin Einarsson,¹ a law student in the University, and Þorgeir Guðmundsson,² a theologian, sent out a prospectus of an annual, which they were about to start under the title of *Ármann á Alþingi*. The prospectus was accompanied by a specimen number (*Sýnishorn*) of the proposed periodical. In 1829 the first volume appeared, and in 1832 the fourth and last was published; they were in octavo, each of some 200 pages. The framework of the composition in the *Sýnishorn*, as well as in all four volumes, is a dialogue between four characters, Sighvatur, Þjóðólfur, Önundur, and an aged stranger who turns out to be Ármann, the guardian spirit who is alleged to live in Ármannsfell, a mountain north of Thingvellir by the Öxará. It is at that place of the ancient Althing that the meetings of the four *dramatis personæ* are made to take place during the four successive years in which the annual was published. The three men belong to three different types which in the opinion of the editors were to be found among the Icelanders of the time. Sighvatur is a tall, well-built, handsome, alert farmer from the North of Iceland, a good husbandman and in tolerable circumstances, an intelligent, thoughtful and well-behaved man, progressive, though cautious. Þjóðólfur is a short, stocky, dark-haired farmer from the district of Flói in the South, rather gloomy, not very keen intellectually, well-

Hauslaug og Þórsdrápa, ed. by Svbj. Egilsson; 1857-58, were included in the reports a specimen of translations from Old Norse into English and French, by Bjarni Johnsen; 1861, *Nogle Bemærkn. om C. Iversens Isl. Formlære* by Jón Porkelsson; 1863, *Um r og ur í niðrlagi orða og orðstofna í íslensku*, by Jón Porkelsson; 1865-67, Xenophon's *Austurför Kyrosar*, transl. by Halldór Kr. Friðriksson and Gísli Magnússon; 1868, *Skýringar á vísum í nokkrum íslenskum sögum*, by Jón Porkelsson; 1870, *Skýringar á vísum í Njáls sögu*, by the same; 1871, *Skýringar á vísum í Grettis sögu*, by the same; 1872, *Skýringar á vísum í Guðmundar sögu Arasonar*, by the same; 1873, *Skýringar á vísum í Gísla sögu Súrssonar*, by the same; 1874, *Athugasemdir um íslenskar málmyndir*, by the same; 1875-76, *Supplement til islandske Ordbøger*, by the same; 1879-1885, *Supplement til islandske Ordbøger, 2. Samling*, by the same; 1886, Horace's *Bréf*, transl. by Gísli Magnússon and Jón Porkelsson; 1887, *Breytingar á myndum videnngingarháttar í fornnorsku og forníslensku*, by Jón Porkelsson; 1888-94, *Beyging sterkra sagnorða í íslensku*, by the same; 1895, *Íslensk sagnorð með þálegri mynd í nútíð*, by the same.

¹ Baldvin Einarsson was born Aug. 2, 1831, and died in Copenhagen Feb. 9, 1833. For his life, see Bogi Th. Melsted's biography in *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafélags* XXV, 1904, pp. 142-197; also *Ný félagsrit* VIII, pp. v-xiv (by Jón Sigurðsson) with portrait; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* IV, pp. 471-473; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* I, pp. 366-367.

² About Þorgeir Guðmundsson (1794-1871), see Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VI, p. 283, and the 1916 memorial volume of the Icelandic Literary Society, pp. 154-155, with portrait.



BALDVIN EINARSSON.

Árman n á Alþingi

eda

almennur Fundur Íslendinga

Utskipt

fyrir búþolva og handaföll á Íslandi

~~~~~

Sýstí Árgáingur

fyrir árið 1829.

~~~~~

Utgáfur af

Þorgeiri Gudmandssyni og Haldrúni Símarssyni
 Cand. theolog. Stud. juris.

~~~~~

Raupmannahöfn 1829.

Prentað hjá E. Græða

Title-page of vol. i. of the *Árman n á Alþingi*.

to-do, closefisted and industrious, but hostile to all innovations, insisting upon the old-fashioned order in everything. Öundur is a man of middle size, light of complexion and slender, a dandy, quick of mind but superficial; he is a cottager from Sel-tjarnarnes in the neighborhood of Reykjavík, who has imbibed

what he takes to be the fashionable ideas current in the town, looks down on every thing Icelandic but imitates foreign manners, and his speech is full of foreign words and phrases mostly corrupted. The description of these characters led to the belief in Iceland that the author reflected on the inhabitants of the districts from which the last two came, and this caused some opposition to the periodical.<sup>1</sup> But the author denied that he had had any such intentions; the characters, he said, represented not any particular localities, but different types which could be found almost anywhere. In the dialogue published in the *Sýnis-horn* the program of the periodical was clearly laid down; it was above all to impress upon people the necessity and value of education. It was of a paramount importance to bring up the children well, to give them good instruction and training in whatever vocation they chose or were expected to follow, and to make them appreciate the value of new things, wherever these were serviceable; but besides this, the editors urged reforms and changes in various fields. There was really nothing novel in the program itself; Magnús Stephensen had laid stress upon the same things, but the application was different. Here the progress was to be based upon national foundations which Magnús Stephensen and his adherents often had overlooked and neglected. To see the difference one needs only compare the names of the *dramatis personæ* in the *Árman á Alþingi* with those in the *Vinagleði*. Here they are genuine products of the native soil, there they were importations with foreign names; here they meet on the most historical spot in the country, there the conversation took place within the four walls of Filodemus' room. To us the *Árman á Alþingi* reveals the first awakening of the national spirit combined with a desire for increased knowledge and practical experience. Baldvin Einarsson, an uncommonly gifted and energetic man, wrote by far the larger part of the volumes, while Þorgeir Guðmundsson primarily was a financial supporter. After the appearance of the first volumes the editors received some support from the government.<sup>2</sup> The publication was discontinued after Baldvin Einarsson's untimely

<sup>1</sup> An opposition to the periodical in Iceland was also due to the controversy between Baldvin Einarsson and R. Chr. Rask, cf. *Islandica* III, pp. 35-36; *Tímarit hins isl. Bókmenntafél.* IX, pp. 29ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Lovs. f. Isl.* IX, pp. 548-549 (Aug. 28, 1830).



death in 1833. The surviving editor, to be sure, intended to continue the periodical,<sup>1</sup> but this apparently he was unable to do.

In the dialogues of the *Ármann á Alþingi* there were inserted numerous treatises and articles and a few poems. Among the latter may be mentioned the *Búnaðarbálkur* by Eggert Ólafsson, and some poems by Finnur Magnússon and others, all with the same purpose, that of praising the country and the various occupations of its people. In the second volume is a long comparison between the ancient and modern Icelanders, which shows the latter in a rather unfavorable light. The treatises deal mostly with farming, fishing, agriculture, and the handicrafts. Noteworthy are two articles on agriculture and horticulture by Baldvin Einarsson, which form the first two installments of a series giving the history of the various livelihoods in Iceland, but this he left unfinished. The contents, especially of the last two volumes, represent several contributions from residents of Iceland. The editors laid a particular stress upon the purity of the language and a good style, and ridiculed the affected and corrupt speech which was altogether too common at that time (cf. vol. III, pp. 11-19).

In a class by itself is a treatise in the last volume by Baldvin Einarsson, on consultative assemblies which had been introduced into Denmark by the ordinance of May 28, 1831.<sup>2</sup> There were to be two such bodies, one for Jutland, and the other for the Danish islands which met at Roskilde. In the latter Iceland was to have two representatives. In a separate pamphlet, written in Danish, Baldvin Einarsson had opposed this arrangement maintaining that if Iceland was to benefit from the new order of things, it would be necessary for the Icelanders to have an assembly of their own, meeting in the home country. In the treatise in the *Ármann* (IV, pp. 13-66) he explained to his countrymen the nature of these assemblies and strongly advocated the establishment of a national assembly for Iceland. He was not listened to by the authorities at the time, and some dozen years passed before such an assembly was founded. But the treatise is of particular interest as the first assertion of nationality in the political life of Iceland, the first effort to secure to the Icelanders a voice and control in their own affairs.

<sup>1</sup> *Skírnir* VII, 1833, pp. 97-98.

<sup>2</sup> *Lous. f. Isl.* IX, pp. 706-712.

We are here at the heart of the mission of the *Ármann*. It was to bring to Iceland the liberal movement and the national revival which stirred the continent of Europe before and after 1830.

There were Icelanders in Copenhagen who soon felt the need of a new periodical by which they could reach their countrymen at home and impart to them their ideas and those of the outside world. The leader of this group was Tómas Sæmundsson,<sup>1</sup> a young theologian, who, after receiving his degree, had started on a trip through Europe which lasted for two years. On this journey he learned much and saw many things which opened his eyes to reforms and changes which he thought ought to be introduced into his native country. Returning to Copenhagen he associated himself with three students of his age and they decided to publish an annual. These three were Konráð Gíslason,<sup>2</sup> a student of philology, Brynjólfur Pétursson,<sup>3</sup> a student of law, and Jónas Hallgrímsson,<sup>4</sup> a naturalist and poet. Before the printing was

<sup>1</sup> Tómas Sæmundsson was born June 7, 1807, and died May 17, 1841. For his life, see *Fjöltnir* VI, pp. 1-6 (by Jónas Hallgrímsson); Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* III, pp. 279-80, Supplem. III, p. 325; *Andvari* XIV, pp. iii-xvi (by Steingr. Thorsteinsson); *Skírnir* LXXXI, pp. 97-116 (by Guðm. Finn-bogason); *Eimreiðin* XIII, pp. 195-205 (by Guðm. Friðjónsson); *Sameiningin* XI, pp. 98-106 (by Jón Bjarnason; cf. *Verði ljós* II, pp. 44-45); *Óðinn* III, pp. 21-22, with portr.; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVII, pp. 32-33.—His *Bréf* edited by Bishop Jón Helgason, his grandson, Reykjavík, 1907, 8°, pp. viii + 296, with portrait. Extracts from his letters had previously been published in *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafél.* XVII, pp. 166-199. Extracts from the account of his European travels, ed. by Jón Helgason, in *Andvari* XXXII, 1907, pp. 25-74.

<sup>2</sup> Konráð Gíslason, born July 3, 1808, died Jan. 4, 1891. For his life, see the biography by Dr. Björn M. Ólsen, in *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafél.* XII, pp. 1-96, which gives the best account of the *Fjöltnir* movement; see also Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* I, p. 496, Supplem. I, pp. 561-562; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VI, pp. 24-27; *Arkiv för nord. Filologi* VII, pp. 293-303 (by Finnur Jónsson), 378-383 (autobiographical sketch, ed. by Kr. Kaalund); *Sunnansfari* VI, pp. 69-72 (by H. Kr. Friðriksson) with portrait; *Óðinn* IV, pp. 25-27 (by Jón Ólafsson) with portrait; *Skírnir* LXXXII, pp. 97-109 (by Þórhallur Bjarnarson).

<sup>3</sup> Brynjólfur Pétursson, born April 15, 1810, died Oct. 18, 1851, chief of the Icelandic department in Copenhagen. See Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* II, 562, Supplem. II, pp. 665-666; *Hið ísl. Bókmentafélag 1816-1916*, p. 155. For some letters of his, see P. Thoroddsen, *Æfissaga Péturs Péturssonar*, 1908, pp. 293-307.

<sup>4</sup> Jónas Hallgrímsson, born Nov. 16, 1807, died May 26, 1845. His *Ljóð-máli* were first published by the Icelandic Literary Society in 1847, a second enlarged edition, with biography by Hannes Hafstein, Copenhagen, 1883; new edition, Reykjavík 1913. For his life and work, see *Fjöltnir* IX, pp. 1-74; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* I, p. 557, Supplem. I, pp. 647-648; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VI, pp. 514-516; P. Thoroddsen, *Landfræðissaga Ísl.* IV,

# FJÖLNIR.

ÁRS-RIT HANDA ÍSLENDÍNGUM.

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Samið, kostað og gefið út

af

*Brynjólfi Péturssyni, Jónasi Hallgrímssyni,  
Konráði Gjislusyni, Tómasi Sæmunzsyni.*

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Fyrsta ár, 1835.

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**KAUPMANNAHÖFN.**

Prentað hjá J. D. Kvistri, bóka- og nótna-prentara.

1835.

Title-page of vol. i. of the *Fjölur*.

begun Tómas Sæmundsson left for Iceland to take charge of a benefice, but in 1835 the first volume of the *Fjölnir*, as the annual was called, appeared in Copenhagen, "written, published, and edited" by the four partners. There was a long introduction from the pen of Tómas Sæmundsson. It opens with praise of the native land and points out what this means to the Icelanders; the author dwells upon the beauties of nature which meet the eye everywhere at home. But the inhabitants, he says, do not make as much out of the land and the opportunities which it offers as they could, nor even what their own ancestors did. "What the nation chiefly suffers from is want of will, lack of courage, and in many respects ignorance, and every one who wishes to bear the name of Icelander must desire to break the dam and let the national life unfold itself in word and deed." In these words he expressed the aim of the four young editors, to break the fetters which held the people, prevented progress and stifled initiative. It was a call such as the nation had never heard before. With regard to the publication the editors laid stress upon four points: firstly, that what it contained be useful, both as regards man's fight with irrational nature, and the organization and management of human society; in the second place, that beauty be observed in language and style; thirdly, that the truth be always followed irrespective of whether it would expose the periodical to the enmity of men; fourthly, that it include only what was good and moral. Articles from outsiders would be published if they treated of subjects timely for discussion or consideration and were in agreement with the principles of the periodical. The main emphasis was laid upon topics which had some actuality and were of importance for the present and the immediate future. The aim was not only that of instructing; entertaining matter was to be included in the form of poems and stories. Articles were to be published anonymously unless the authors expressed a desire to the contrary. Each volume was to be divided into two sections, the Icelandic, and the Foreign or

pp. 2-20; *Nýja öldin* III, pp. 181-200 (by Jón Ólafsson); *Skrínir* LXXXI, pp. 315-325 (by Guðm. Finnbogason); *Jónas Hallgrímsson, fyrirlestur*, by Þorsteinn Gíslason, Seyðisfjörður, 1903, 8°, pp. 32; *Illustreret Tidende* XXIV, pp. 523-528, 540-543 (by C. Rosenberg); *Eimreiðin* VIII, pp. 118-121 (by Helgi Pétursson); XI, pp. 92-94 (by Matth. Þórðarson); XIII, pp. 184-195 (by Guðm. Friðjónsson); XIV, pp. 100-105 (by Þorv. Thoroddsen); XV, pp. 14-19 (by Stefán Stefánsson); *Óðinn* III, pp. 81-83 (by Matth. Jochumsson); IV, pp. 17-19 (by Matth. Þórðarson) with portraits; V, p. 98.

General, according to the subjects treated; and in addition there was to be a special news section; but these divisions were not strictly followed throughout. The first four volumes (1835-38) appeared under the editorship of all the four original partners, while the fifth (1839) was written, published, and edited by Tómas Sæmundsson alone. The reason for this was pecuniary, as he was the only one able at the time to defray the expenses of publication. Then the periodical was suspended for three years, and in the meantime Tómas Sæmundsson died. When it reappeared it was somewhat changed, and was then published by an organized society with by-laws.<sup>1</sup> In the case of the first four editors their relations were personal, and there seems not to have been any real organization back of the annual in those earlier years. The sixth volume saw the light in 1843 and the publishers styled themselves "Nokkrir Íslendingar," and so they appeared on the title-page of the three following volumes, while Gísli Magnússon<sup>2</sup> was called "responsible editor" of volume seven, and Halldór Kr. Friðriksson<sup>3</sup> of volumes eight and nine. The ninth and last volume (for 1846) bears the imprint of 1847, and contains principally posthumous writings of Jónas Hallgrímsson. The volumes are all of uniform octavo size, but they vary considerably as to the number of pages. They are neatly printed and their whole make-up is attractive.<sup>4</sup>

There are probably few examples in literary history where a publication has had such a rapid and decisive influence upon language and literature as the *Fjölmir* had, and that in spite of a strong opposition which it met with from the very beginning. The editors firmly believed in their mission and had the ability to give expression to it in a beautiful style and at the same time with force and fearlessness. Greatest, perhaps, was the influence it exercised upon the language, and in that part of the movement Konráð Gíslason was the leader; he had "philological knowledge

<sup>1</sup> See *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafél.* XII, pp. 93-96.

<sup>2</sup> Gísli Magnússon, born July 15, 1816, died Aug. 24, 1878. See Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* Supplem. II, pp. 307-308; *Sunnansari* XI, pp. 75-77, with portr.; *Nýtt kirkjublað* XI, pp. 145-150 (by Janus Jónsson).

<sup>3</sup> Halldór Kristján Friðriksson born Nov. 27, 1819, died March 23, 1902. See Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* Supplem. I, pp. 513-514; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexicon* V, pp. 390-391; *Sunnansari* I, pp. 69-71, portr.; *Andvari* XXVIII, pp. 1-24 (by Jón Þorkelsson), portr.

<sup>4</sup> There was some disagreement between the editors about the size and the type, see Tómas Sæmundsson, *Bréf*, 1907, pp. 144ff.

combined with the acutest judgment and the keenest sense for what was correct language, pure and beautiful." And what he wrote on the subject is of permanent value, such as the paper on the Icelandic language in volume four, and the introductory paragraph to the reviews in volume seven. They contain so exquisite and strong an appeal to the people to preserve their language that they will be turned to by future generations. In his reviews of books he dwelt exclusively upon the language, exposing without mercy the faults, and he gave thus a most salutary lesson to writers and readers alike. But like almost all ardent reformers Konráð Gíslason was apt to go too far in his demands and criticisms. Thus the translating or putting in quotation marks of all foreign proper names was certainly going too far. Unsuccessful were also his endeavors to introduce a new orthography based upon the pronunciation. This met with so determined an opposition from the majority of the people and some of the leading philologists, such as Sveinbjörn Egilsson, that the editors of the *Fjöltnir* had to abandon it.<sup>1</sup> Even Tómas Sæmundsson had never fully approved of it.<sup>2</sup> Konráð Gíslason's articles on the subject are nevertheless very interesting.

The *Fjöltnir* initiated a renaissance in the literature of Iceland. This was at that time at a low ebb, and little was printed beyond new editions of older works. The literary conditions were analysed and criticised in a long essay by Tómas Sæmundsson in volume five. He showed the worthlessness of many of these older works, and made many suggestions with a view to bringing forth new literary products; he considered it the duty of the directors of the printing office at Viðey, which was public property, to show interest in the furtherance of new literary projects rather than to make money by publishing old and antiquated books merely because they still were in popular favor.<sup>3</sup> The reviews in the *Fjöltnir* excelled anything in that line which had been printed before in Icelandic. Suffice it to mention Tómas Sæmundsson's review of Árni Helgason's *Helgidaga prédikanir*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf*, 1911, pp. 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Bréf*, 1907, pp. 185-186, 197ff., 217ff.

<sup>3</sup> This and other things in *Fjöltnir* caused the publication of Dr. Jón Hjaltalín's pamphlet: *Adfinning við Eineygða-Fjöltnir*, Viðeyarklaustri, 1839, 8°, pp. 28, to which Tómas Sæmundsson replied by *Fjöltnir og Eineigdi-Fjöltnir*, Viðeyarklaustri 1840, 8°, pp. 38 + (2).

(vol. V, pp. 116-127), and Jónas Hallgrímsson's review of Sigurður Breiðfjörð's *Rímur af Tistrani og Indíönu* (vol. III, pp. 18-29). The latter greatly offended all the friends of the *rímur*, and they were many; but it gave a staggering blow to the *rímur*-poets from which they never recovered; it opened men's eyes to the shallowness and bad taste displayed in the works of these poets.<sup>1</sup> But a literary revival can not be brought about by destructive criticism alone; nor was this the case with the *Fjölínir*. The renaissance had primarily its origins in the poems of Jónas Hallgrímsson, which were printed in the pages of the annual. They set the standard by which poets were to be measured, and their influence was remarkable.<sup>2</sup>

Especially noteworthy are Tómas Sæmundsson's annual reviews of Icelandic events, and the account of his travels through a part of Iceland in 1834, which were published in the first five volumes. In these he touched upon almost everything—farming and fishing as well as literature and intellectual life; and they all show the author's keen judgment and unprejudiced views, as well as his desire to improve things, when he thought it necessary. Nothing escaped the observation of this ardent and progressive spirit, and he was anxious that no opportunity be neglected from which the country and the inhabitants might benefit. There is not much about politics to be found in the volumes of the *Fjölínir*, although the editors avowedly were in favor of a separate consultative assembly for Iceland; when this had finally been granted by the king, they strongly advocated that the assembly be held at Thingvellir; to the question of the meeting place they attached great importance, and therein they showed more of a romantic spirit than of practical sense. The organization of the re-established Althing and other matters connected with it form the subject of an article by Brynjólfur Pétursson in volume seven, in which he expressed the opinions of his associates. Some other public questions were also discussed in the *Fjölínir*, but space does not permit us to dwell upon them. The temperance ques-

<sup>1</sup> Jónas Hallgrímsson was not the first to attack the *rímur*. Tómas Sæmundsson had done so before in an article which he sent to his co-editors in Copenhagen, but they suppressed the passage; see *Bréf* 1907, pp. 187-188. *Sunnanpósturinn* had also touched upon the matter, see I, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> About this, see especially Olaf Hansen, *Islandsk Renaissance. I Hundred-aaret for Jónas Hallgrímssons Födsel. Et Stykke Litteraturhistorie*. København, 1907, 8°, pp. (2) + 123.

tion was first raised by the editors of this annual, who in a long article, principally based upon an American pamphlet, presented the matter to their readers and strongly endorsed it. They founded a temperance society themselves, branches of which they hoped to see established in various parts of Iceland. The movement lasted for some years, but it was really of no further consequence. The foreign section, which was kept separate in the first volumes, soon disappeared. To it belong several articles written or translated by Jónas Hallgrímsson, on geology and other subjects from natural history, a few translated stories, and a long article on Kosciusko.

The original editors of the *Fjöltnir* constituted a most fortunate group of men for the task they set out to perform. Tómas Sæmundsson was, of course, the moving spirit, who with his energy and enthusiasm kept things going and paid more than his share of the expenses. His mind was full of ideas, and he was eager to put them into practice or see them tested out. His pen was constantly in motion, and such was his ardor that he often could not spare time to revise his writings or give them as polished a form as was desirable; he therefore sent them for revision, before they were printed, to his co-editors in Copenhagen. Occasionally he became impatient with their labors, and suspected that they neglected the practical side and put too much stress upon the outward form. Towards those who opposed or disagreed with the *Fjöltnir* he showed more tolerance than his collaborators abroad, which may be explained by the fact that the latter lived detached from the people and at times were apt to push their principles too hard. Konráð Gíslason's profound philological knowledge and fine literary taste, and Jónas Hallgrímsson's poetic genius, made the volumes of the *Fjöltnir* a monument of the greatest literary importance. Brynjólfur Pétursson was least prominent in the pages of the annual, but he was not without influence, and by those who knew, he is said to have been perhaps the noblest character of them all. These four men with one exception died young and did not see the fruit of their labors. Tómas Sæmundsson died in 1841, Jónas Hallgrímsson in 1844, and Brynjólfur Pétursson in 1851. Konráð Gíslason alone lived to old age, but he soon buried himself in philological researches, and during the last forty years of his life wrote hardly anything in the tongue which he had done so much to reform and reshape.





TÓMAS SÆMUNDSSON



Eight years passed after the discontinuation of *Klausturpósturinn* before another periodical came into existence in Iceland. In the same year as the *Fjölur* first appeared, a monthly was started in Reykjavík by some members of the Icelandic Literary Society, and it was the intention of the founders that if any profit were derived from the publication, it should go into the treasury of the society.<sup>1</sup> This was *Sunnanpósturinn*, which was published monthly in small octavo numbers of sixteen pages, from January, 1835, to December, 1836, and after a suspension of one year, again from January to December, 1838. The first volume was edited by Þórður Sveinbjörnsson,<sup>2</sup> associate judge and later chief justice of the Superior Court, the second and third by Rev. Árni Helgason,<sup>3</sup> minister of Garðar and president of the Reykjavík section of the Icelandic Literary Society. These two were also the principal contributors to its pages.<sup>4</sup> In its exterior as well as in the arrangement of the text, *Sunnanpósturinn* was visibly modelled upon its predecessor from Viðeyarklaustur. It was a fairly good newspaper, at least as to domestic events, but, as was to be expected, the reports of these were not infrequently somewhat belated. Otherwise the contents represent mostly poems, stories, and essays on different subjects, many of these being translations. The poems are chiefly by Þórður Sveinbjörnsson, but there are also some by Sveinbjörn Egilsson,<sup>5</sup> Bjarni Thorarensen, and others. Of prose translations may be mentioned selections from B. Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*.<sup>6</sup> There are only a few original treatises, and these deal particularly

<sup>1</sup> *Sunnanpósturinn* II, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Þórður Sveinbjörnsson, born Sept. 4, 1786, died Feb. 20, 1856. His autobiography has recently been published by the Icelandic Historical Society, Reykjavík, 1916, 8°, pp. (4) + 115, with portrait. See also Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* III, pp. 270-272, Supplem. III, pp. 312-313; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVI, pp. 618-619.

<sup>3</sup> Árni Helgason, born Oct. 27, 1777, died Dec. 14, 1869; was with Rask the founder of the Icel. Lit. Soc. See his *Efminning* [by Grímur Thomsen], Reykjavík, 1877, 8°, pp. 71; also Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* I, 625-626, Supplem. I, pp. 751-752; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VII, pp. 289-290; *Hið ísl. Bókmenntafjel*, 1816-1916, pp. 143-145, portr.

<sup>4</sup> Árni Helgason writes in a letter to Finnur Magnússon, March 3, 1836: "Pegar þér lesið No. 11. af *Sunnanp.* f. 1835, þá síáið þér orsökina til að Sveinbjörnssen redigerar ei þetta blað lengur. Það fauk í mig að fá dylgiur þar, sem hvergi eiga heima. Meðan eg hefi nokkuð með það blað að sýsla, skal eg síálfur ráða, hvað í því verður prentað."

<sup>5</sup> Among translated poems by him is one of a Danish paraphrase of Thomas Gray's *Elegy in a country churchyard*, vol. III, pp. 29-30.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. III, pp. 97-108 (Vegur til velmegunar).

# Sunnan Pósturinn

útsendur af eilhlutun

ARNA HELGASONAR,

Stiftsprófasts og Riddara af Dannebrog.

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No. 1.                      Janúaríus.                      1835.

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Prentaður af Videyar Klaustri, af Bókprjófjara Selga Selgasfyni.



## Urstíðir lífsins.

1.

**V**orid má líkjaft vorri úngdóms tíð  
 víst þá hvar mildrar himinblíðu nýtur;  
 á gotu rósum gleðin stráir blíð  
 glæðbjarta framtíð úngdóms þánfín lítur.  
 Sæll er sá úngill af eingum sorgum veit  
 öllum nálægum vinar gífur heit!

2.

**Þ**vorid líður! líkjaft úngdóms draum!  
 líður að sumars hita-móðu dögum,  
 að fleiru má þá augað gefa gaum  
 vor gjörifti skylda. lífs að byrði drögum.  
 Sæll er sá varnll, ef með þblgri hand  
 erfiðar Guði, og stírkfir fædurland.

3.

**M**ed ýmsri breiting, honum fram-hjá fer  
 flughræð sæl tíð; sem brúfud var tilþerfa,

(1)

The first page of *Sunnanpósturinn*.

with some medical topics (by Jón Thorstensen, surgeon-general); there is, however, one on the education of children, and another on a literary subject. Ordinances of the government and the decisions of the Superior Court were printed from time to time. *Sunnanpósturinn* is now chiefly remembered as the contemporary and opponent of the *Fjöltnir*. The *Sendibréf eins Borgfirðings*,<sup>1</sup> by Eiríkur Sverrisson, was the longest and most thorough criticism of the *Fjöltnir* which was published at the time; this was a declaration of war against the editors of the Copenhagen annual, and they were not slow in turning their attention to *Sunnanpósturinn*, where they found enough to criticize.<sup>2</sup> In the question of the new orthography which Konráð Gíslason tried to introduce, *Sunnanpósturinn* got the better of the controversy, thus scoring its only victory.<sup>3</sup> The language and style in *Sunnanpósturinn* was as a rule open to severe criticism; but the editors can not alone be blamed for it, they were in that respect the children of their age; their publication was a representative of a period which was dying, while the *Fjöltnir* was the herald of a rising generation. The principal charge which may be brought against the editors of the former is, perhaps, their lack of imagination. They seem to have had very little of importance to communicate to their readers. Like most Icelandic periodicals *Sunnanpósturinn* had a hard road to travel. Because of lack of support it had to be discontinued after two years; then the government granted it exemption from postage by the overland mail,<sup>4</sup> which privilege revived it and kept it going for one year more.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sunnanpósturinn* II, pp. 4-9, 23-28, 62-64, 89-94, 155-160, 170-173, 185-189.

<sup>2</sup> See *Fjöltnir* I, pp. 81-82; II<sup>2</sup>, pp. 45-46; VI<sup>1</sup>, pp. 115-116, VI<sup>2</sup>, pp. 27ff. Tómas Sæmundsson says about *Sunnanpósturinn*, "með því að hann hugsaði ekki hærra í fyrstu enn að verða ekki fólki til aina né neinum til meins, held eg honum hafi tekizt hvortveggja." He compares it, on account of its insignificance, to *Diario di Roma*, the papal paper. Amusing was Jónas Hallgrímsson's trick of rewriting one of Þórður Sveinbjörnsson's poems (*Sunnanpósturinn* I, pp. 127-128; *Fjöltnir* III, pp. 29-32).—See also Jónas Hallgrímsson's epitaph on *Sunnanpósturinn*, printed in *Sunnansfari* XI, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> See the Árnabjörn articles in *Sunnanpósturinn* II, pp. 124-126 (by Sv. Egilsson?), 177-185 (by Árni Helgason).

<sup>4</sup> Letter of May 6, 1837 (*Lovs. f. Isl.* XI, pp. 48-49).

<sup>5</sup> In a letter, dated April 5, 1838, Árni Helgason writes to Finnur Magnússon: "Eg álaðist til að halda áfram Sunnanpóstinum þetta árið; ætlaði af því að komast í stríð við Justitiarius, en það fór alt laglega milli okkar. Tímarit, sem Yfirrétturinn ætlaði að gefa út, lagðist fyrir óðal. Auglýsing var prentuð en er aldrei útsend. Ritið átti að heita Lögrétta. Innihaldið átti að vera jurisdíkt politískt, en so kom ogso þar fram sundurlyndið, og alt datt um koll."

The editor then thought of continuing it as a quarterly, but he had also to abandon that plan.<sup>1</sup>

In 1836 the first Icelandic *Almanak* was published, for the year 1837; it was issued at the expense of the University of Copen-

# Almanak

fyrir ár eptir Krists fæðing

1837,

sem er hið fyrsta ár eptir Hlaupár enn fimta.  
eptir Sumarauka,

útreiknad

fyrir Keikiavik á Íslandi

af

C. F. R. Olussen,

Prof. Astronom.

útlagt og lagad eptir Íslendsku tímatali

af

Sinni Magnúsfyni,

Prof.

---

Selt innfest, í Kaupmannaböfn, á eintri skt, fyrir  
8 Ríkisbókastofndinga silfurs.

---

**Kaupmannaböfn.**

Prentad hjá Directeur Jens Høstrup Schulz,  
konunglegum og Kongens Bøhøffjara.

Title-page of the first *Almanak*.

hagen which had been granted the privilege of publishing almanacs.<sup>2</sup> This first almanac was computed for the latitude of Reykjavík by Professor Chr. Friis R. Olufsen, and was translated into Icelandic and edited by Finnur Magnússon.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sunnanpósturinn* III, pp. 111–112.

<sup>2</sup> See *Lovs. f. Isl.* X, pp. 697–698 (Feb. 3, 1836), 703 (Feb. 13, 1836), 712–713 (March 12, 1836). The University sold its right to print the first almanacs to Schultz, the Danish printer, but from 1842 it published them at its own expense (cf. *Lovs. f. Isl.* XII, p. 173; XIV, p. 368).

<sup>3</sup> Bogi Benediktsson of Staðarfell, under the date of Aug. 15, 1836, writes about the new almanac to Finnur Magnússon as follows: "Almanak yðar

Since that time the almanac has been printed every year. Professor Olufsen wrote it until 1856; the next year was by Professor P. Pedersen, but thereafter, from 1858 to 1888, it was written by H. C. F. C. Schjellerup. Finnur Magnússon translated the almanacs down to 1848,<sup>1</sup> being succeeded by Jón Sigurðsson who translated them down to 1880—that being the last to appear under his name. The arrangement of the contents of the almanacs has remained virtually the same through all these years; in 1861 the size was changed from sextodecimo to duodecimo. Before these annual almanacs were published the Icelanders had for chronological computations made use partly of the various calendary works which from time to time had been printed in Icelandic, partly of printed Danish and Norwegian almanacs, and partly of written Icelandic ones.<sup>2</sup>

Much as had been written upon economic and agricultural questions in Icelandic since the middle of the eighteenth century, it was not until the fourth decade of the nineteenth century that a society was founded with the purpose of promoting these interests. On Jan. 28, 1837, the *Húss- og Bústjórnaarsfélag Suðurlandsins* was formed, with the view of furthering the welfare of farmers and fishermen within the Southern Province; this was to be done by instructive publications, by pecuniary support and prizes, and by improving the old methods and introducing

hefe eg yfirfarið, og hefe ecke vit á betr enn það sie að öllu ágiætt, og nærre því ofmikið haft fyrir því, þar bændur flestir hér skifta sér ecke af öðrum mánuðum enn Þorra, Góu, Einnánuðe og Hörpu, enn allur fjölde mun hafa verið óviss um árs og mánaða niðurskipan þeirra gömlu. Enn nú hangir það við hiá bændum, einkum gömlum, að þeir vilja hafa spádóma veðuráttu-fars á almanökum, hvað ómögulegt sem er að gjöra hann áreiðanlegan; þó hefe eg lagt merke til, að 19da hvört ár verður líkust veðurátt hér í landi (er því ei aldeilis marklaust þeirra gömlu tunglaldar ár í því tilliti, eða sögn þeirra þar um). Líka mátti í þeim gömlu almanökum dönsku athuga, þá aspecter og conjunctioner etc. hrúguðust saman (almanakanna teikn) vísaði jafnan órólegt veðurlag.”

<sup>1</sup> Finnur Magnússon did more than to translate; he added the old Icelandic chronology, as he explains in a letter to J. H. Schröder of Uppsala, dated April 3, 1837: “. . . tager jeg mig ved denne særdeles gode Lejlighed, den Frihed at vedlægge den Islandske Almanak for 1838, tildeels affattet ved mig, for den Curiositets Skyld, at den foruden den kristelige Tidsregning, ogsaa indeholder den ældgamle hedenske, uden Tvivl fra Asien nedstammende, som fordem (med forskjellige smaae Forandringer f. Ex. ved Nytaarsterminen) har været fulgt i de nordiske Riger, og som endnu følges i Island, men som dog ikke for end ret nylig, er bleven fuldstændig udgivet som passende for bestemte Aarsløb.” (Schröders Brefsamling VIII, 243, Uppsala University Library.)

<sup>2</sup> See *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.* 1914, pp. 4-5 (cf. p. 679). See also Jón Porkels-son's article on the almanacs in *Almanak hins ísl. Þjóðvinafélags* for 1914, pp. lxxx-cl, which is the first truly Icelandic almanac printed.

new ones in farming, fishing, and the handicrafts.<sup>1</sup> The society, of course, was founded upon the Danish Agricultural Society, which since its foundation had included Iceland within its sphere of operation. In 1839 the first part of the society's publication, the *Búnaðarrit*, appeared, this being followed in 1843 by the second part, completing volume one.<sup>2</sup> The first part of volume two was printed in Reykjavík in 1846, and this was the last to be published. These two octavo volumes contain some valuable contributions. Tómas Sæmundsson published there a long article on the leasing and management of farms; an experienced sailor gave rules for the guidance of helmsmen; Björn Halldórsson's work called *Arnbjörg*, a guide for housekeepers,<sup>3</sup> with a biographical sketch of that worthy parson, was printed here for the first time. Dr. Jón Thorstensen contributed an essay on the treatment of children. An article on birch forests in Iceland was likewise included. The reports of the society are to be found there, but sometimes they were also printed separately. Later the name of the society was changed to *Búnaðarfélag Suðurlandsins*, and after 1856 its reports were regularly published, occasionally accompanied by treatises or brief articles.<sup>4</sup> In 1899 the society was incorporated in the *Búnaðarfélag Íslands*.

The liberal ideas which spread through Europe after the overthrow of the French monarchy, in 1830, found their way to Iceland and aroused the people in some degree to political activity. Baldvin Einarsson first voiced the claim of Iceland to a special consultative assembly. Further demands could hardly be made so long as an absolute monarchy existed in Denmark. In 1837 a petition was presented to the king by the Icelanders, asking for a separate consultative chamber. The only result of this was that the old king by a royal letter of Aug. 22, 1838, directed that a committee of a few government officials should meet in Reykjavík every other year to consider various questions and give their advice as to them. These sessions

<sup>1</sup> See *Sunnanpósturinn* III, pp. 9-11; *Búnaðarrit* I, pp. 1-26. The by-laws were printed separately in Viðey, 1837, cf. *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.* 1914, p. 80; *Bibl. Not.* V, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Part one was reviewed in *Fjölmiðir* VI, pp. 60-61; for part two, see *Bibl. Not.* I, 133.

<sup>3</sup> This corresponds to the author's *Atli* (Hrappsey, 1780), a guide for husbandmen (cf. *Bibl. Not.* I, 83).

<sup>4</sup> See *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.* 1914, p. 80.



took place in the summers of 1839 and 1841, and their proceedings were issued in print under the title of *Tíðindi frá nefndarfundum íslenskra embættismanna í Reykjavík árin 1839 og 1841* (Copenhagen, 1842, 8°).<sup>1</sup> They were edited under the supervision of Árni Helgason and Þórður Sveinbjörnsson, members of the committee, but the reports were written for 1839 by Þórður Jónasson, and for 1841 by Kristján Kristjánsson, who had acted as secretaries of the committee during the meetings.<sup>2</sup> Before the second session took place King Frederick the Sixth had died (Dec. 3, 1839), and King Christian the Eighth had ascended the throne. He soon showed himself favorable to the cause of the Icelanders. On May 22, 1840,<sup>3</sup> a royal letter was issued directing the committee of government officials, which was to meet in the following year, to take under consideration whether it would not be more advantageous for Iceland to have a consultative body of its own, and in case the committee thought so, to advise as to the organization of such a body. This led to the ordinance of March 8, 1843,<sup>4</sup> by which the Althing was re-established as a consultative assembly.

The ordinance of 1840 called forth great enthusiasm on the part of the Icelanders. Many pens were set in motion to discuss the future assembly, but much of what was written at the time proved to be of little practical value. There were those who wished the new body to be composed in much the same way as the ancient Althing, thus disregarding the entirely changed conditions of the country and the different spirit of the times. Many of the most prominent men demanded that the assembly should under all circumstances meet at Thingvellir. At this juncture a new man came to the front, who was destined to become the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Lovs. f. Isl.* XI, p. 701.

<sup>2</sup> During this time Iceland was also represented at the estates in Roskilde by two Icelanders who were appointed by the king. No official report was issued in Icelandic about the proceedings there concerning Icelandic affairs. The full proceedings were, of course, published in Danish. For the guidance and information of their countrymen Jón Sigurðsson and other Icelanders in Copenhagen translated the portions dealing with Iceland, and published them as *Fréttir frá Fulltrúa-þinginu í Hróarskeldu viðvíkjandi málum Íslendinga*, Copenhagen, 1840, 8°, pp. (4) + 72, and *Fréttir frá Fulltrúaþingi í Hróarskeldu 1842, viðvíkjandi málefnum Íslendinga*, Copenhagen, 1843, 8°, pp. 256. The latter is much longer, as at that session the re-establishment of the Althing was under discussion.

<sup>3</sup> *Lovs. f. Isl.* XI, pp. 614-628.

<sup>4</sup> *Lovs. f. Isl.* XII, pp. 451-525.

leader of his nation in the political struggle which now was beginning. This was Jón Sigurðsson,<sup>1</sup> then thirty years of age, who had hitherto devoted himself to historical and philological studies in Copenhagen. He felt called upon to advise his countrymen on the questions which now lay before them, and in order to be able to do so a periodical was required by which he could reach them. He and his followers first thought of reviving the *Fjöltnir*, which had been suspended for two years; but the negotiations with the Fjöltnir-men were unsuccessful as the latter were unwilling to yield on some principal points, such as a change in the title and the aims and contents of the periodical.<sup>2</sup> Therefore Jón Sigurðsson and several other Icelanders founded a new annual called *Ný félagsrit*,<sup>3</sup> the first volume of which appeared in 1841 and which continued to be published yearly in Copenhagen until 1873, with the exception of the years 1865-66 and 1869. Thus thirty volumes in octavo were published, their size varying from some 150 to 200 pages, neatly printed and well made up. On the title-page the publishers styled themselves as "Nokkrir Íslendingar,"<sup>4</sup> but the editing was in the hands of a board of five members who were elected every year. Jón Sigurðsson was always on the board, while the others changed continually.<sup>5</sup> He directed absolutely the policy of the annual;

<sup>1</sup> Jón Sigurðsson was born June 17, 1811, and, as was often customary at the time, was prepared for the University by his father and privately graduated 1829. He was immatriculated at the University of Copenhagen in 1833, but never took any final degree there. He spent the rest of his life in Copenhagen, making frequent visits to Iceland. He was member of the Althing from 1845 until his death, and usually Speaker of the House when he attended the sessions. For his life, see especially *Jón Sigurðsson. Um ævi hans og starf. Aldarminning Skírnis*. Reykjavík, 1911, 8°, pp. (4) + 208, illustr.; *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafél.* III, 1882, pp. 1-30 (by Jón Þorkelsson: Um vísindalega starfsemi J. S., etc.); *Andvari* VI, 1880, pp. 1-43; *Jón Sigurðsson, the Icelandic patriot. A biography*. Reykjavík, 1887, 8°, pp. (2) + 63 + 16; Konrad Maurer, *Zur politischen Geschichte Islands*, Leipzig, 1880, pp. 301-318. — Selection of Jón Sigurðsson's letters was published in 1911 by the Icelandic Literary Society: *Bréf Jóns Sigurðssonar. Úrval*. Reykjavík, 1911, 8°, pp. viii + 698, illustr.

<sup>2</sup> See *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafél.* XII, 1891, pp. 41ff., 89-93.

<sup>3</sup> Called so in distinction from *Gömlu félagsritin*, see above p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> In vols. IV-VI are to be found lists of those who shared the expenses of publication; they number a little over twenty.

<sup>5</sup> The members of the board, besides Jón Sigurðsson, were the following: Þorvaldur Björnsson, vols. 24-25; Gunnlaugur Blöndal, 22-23; Lárus Blöndal, 23; Gísli Brynjúlfsson, 8-19; Magnús Eiríksson, 2-16; Vilhjálmur Finsen, 7-11; Jón Guðmundsson, 9, 11-12; Jón Hjaltalín, 1-5, 13; Sigurður L. Jónsson, 20-30; Björn Jónsson, 29-30; Eiríkur Jónsson, 26-30; Þorsteinn Jónsson, 6; Skapti Jósefsson, 26-28; Sigurður Melsteð, 2-5; Arnljótur

**NY**  
**FÉLAGSRIT.**

GEFIN ÚT

AF

**NOKKURM ÍSLENDÍNGUM.**

**Fyrsta ár.**

FORSTÖÐUNEFND :

**BJARNI SÍVERTSEN, JÓN HJALTALÍN, JÓN SIGURÐSSON,  
ODDGEIRR STEPHENSEN, ÓLAFUR PÁLSSON.**

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**Kostar 56 skildinga.**

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**KAUPMANNAHÖFN, 1841.**

**Í PRENTSMÍÐJU S. L. MÖLLERS.**

Title-page of vol. i. of the *Ný félagsrit*.

it was his organ, founded to carry on political propaganda in Iceland, to guide, instruct and shape public opinion there, and to keep the people united in the fight for political liberty. The periodical never paid and for financial reasons was often on the point of being discontinued. Jón Sigurðsson and his fellow-workers kept it going at a personal sacrifice; it was only occasionally that they received some pecuniary support from sympathizers in Iceland. In spite of the popularity which the annual enjoyed from the beginning, its sale seems never to have been very large.<sup>1</sup> Every spring, however, people looked eagerly forward to a new volume of the *Ný félagsrit*.

The editors stated their program in the preface to volume one. In this stress is laid upon the fact that the knowledge of oneself is as important for nations as individuals, and to contribute to the spreading of such knowledge within the Icelandic nation was the purpose of the editors. The knowledge of oneself, however, does not consist merely in knowing one's own conditions, but also those of other nations and one's relations to them. Being published outside of Iceland, the *Ný félagsrit* was to devote itself particularly to the latter; conditions at home were deemed a proper subject for a periodical issued there. Of foreign countries Denmark was the one which it was of most importance for the Icelanders to know, because of their close relations with it, which were therefore especially to be dealt with in the annual. Thus the political program was clearly stated and it was consistently adhered to throughout the existence of the *Ný félagsrit*, and from the beginning the editors stated their opinions frankly and fearlessly. Some people seemingly thought that they were too outspoken and sharp in their utterances; this was referred to in the preface to volume two, but the editors declared that they had nothing to apologize for, as their words had conveyed their convictions. In the preface to volume

Ólafsson, 15-19; Björn M. Ólsen, 30; Ólafur Pálsson, 1; Bjarni Sívertsen, 1-2; Brynjólfur Snorrason, 7, 10; Magnús Stephensen, 24-25; Oddgeir Stephensen, 1, 3-8; Grímur P. Thomsen, 6, 13-17; Bogi Thorarensen, 12, 14; Bergur Thorberg, 20-21; Steingrímur Thorsteinsson, 18-22, 25-29; and Guðbrandur Vigfússon, 17-24.

<sup>1</sup> "Vér ætlum, að alt upplag Félagsritanna hafi aldrei yfir stigið 800 exemplör, og þó megum vér fullyrða, að varla hafi gengið út af þeim helmingur, því síður að andvirði hafi komið inn fyrir helminginn á ári." *Íslendingur* III, 1862, p. 74.—The lists of subscribers in vols. V-VI of *Ný félagsrit* account for some 250 copies, but this probably fell off later, cf. vol. XVI, pp. 197-198. See also *Norðri* IV, 1856, pp. 91-93.

three they asked for consideration on the part of readers, in view of the difficulty they had in the gathering of material for articles on public affairs; because in this respect they had entirely to depend upon their own collections and labors, since the government did not publish any satisfactory reports or statements regarding the affairs of Iceland.

Most of the articles on political questions were written by Jón Sigurðsson. It has been calculated that from his pen come about 3200 pages of the *Ný félagsrit*, or about two-thirds of the thirty volumes.<sup>1</sup> To analyze or even to enumerate all these contributions here would carry us too far, and I shall confine myself to mentioning only the principal subjects which he wrote about. First of all was the question of a separate constitutional government for Iceland. To the first volumes he contributed articles on the organization of the Althing as a consultative chamber, laying down the principal rules to be followed in its re-establishment so as to make it as useful and modern an institution as possible; his views were in divergence from those of most other writers on the subject; but his suggestions were finally recognized and in the main carried out. This question took a totally different aspect when Danish absolutism was abolished in 1848 and Denmark received a constitutional government. Then Jón Sigurðsson immediately demanded the same or a similar form of government for Iceland, independent of the Danish parliament. In the volume of the *Ný félagsrit* which appeared that year, he published a *Hugvekja til Íslendinga*, where he stated briefly and clearly the principles of political autonomy for Iceland, and gave form to the demands which henceforth figured as the fundamental issues in the long political struggle which ensued. Before taking any definite step in settling the question, the Danish king promised to consult the Icelandic nation through its representatives on the subject. A national convention was convoked in the summer of 1851, but through the interference of the representative of the crown, it ended without results, and for the following sixteen years the Danish government ignored the matter. Jón Sigurðsson, on the other hand, kept the question alive by his writings, and never lost an opportunity to bring it before the people. The solution which was finally arrived at in 1874, when a constitution was granted, was therefore due more to him and

<sup>1</sup> Jón Þorkelsson, in *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmentafél.* III, pp. 17-20.

his untiring efforts than to any other man. Not that he was entirely satisfied with it; he considered it only as one step forward and a foundation for a further advance. The second great question, and one closely connected with the first, was that of the financial relations between Iceland and Denmark. The statements which the government issued regarding the revenue which the Danish treasury received from Iceland were very unsatisfactory, and usually showed that the government appropriated larger amounts to Iceland than were received; in other words, that Iceland was not self-supporting. This Jón Sigurðsson questioned, demanding clearer and more detailed statements, with the result that the government gradually gave out more minute accounts, which before long showed a balance in favor of Iceland. As time went on, he demanded a complete separation of the finances of the two countries, and this led to a long and wearisome struggle in which some of his own followers wavered; but he stood firm, and in the end won out; the final settlement was on the lines he had formulated. The third question was that of freedom for Icelanders to trade with all nations. In 1786 the pernicious commercial monopoly had been abolished and all subjects of the Danish king had been allowed to carry on trade with Iceland, while men of other nations could only do so occasionally and by special permission. This, of course, was a most unsatisfactory arrangement, and the Icelanders very soon petitioned the king to extend the freedom of trade, but without avail. Jón Sigurðsson took the matter up in the *Ný félagsrit* as well as on the floor of the Althing, and thanks to his illuminating writings and persistent efforts the Danish government finally yielded; the law of April 15, 1854, was issued, granting full freedom of trade. The fourth important question which was discussed in the *Ný félagsrit* was that of schools and education. Here Jón Sigurðsson also took the leading part and directed the action. We find in those pages articles on the history of schools in Iceland, on reforms of the existing schools, on the establishment of theological, medical, and law schools, on agricultural schools, and on elementary instruction. Many of these were written by Jón Sigurðsson, and he lived to see several reforms, which he and his adherents had advocated, carried out. The Latin School was transferred from Bessastaðir to Reykjavík in 1846, and various changes for the better introduced at that time and afterwards. The Pastoral



JÓN SIGURÐSSON





Seminary was founded in 1847, and the Medical School in 1876. It will be clear from all this what an important part the *Ný félagsrit* played in the history of Iceland during the decades in which it was published.<sup>1</sup>

The writings of Jón Sigurðsson are a model of lucidity, and bear witness to his profound scholarship; they are always founded on a thorough knowledge of the subject which they deal with, and display a clear view of the useful and practical side of things. Once having formulated his demands or outlined his program he never yielded. He repeated himself over and over in his writings, so as to keep the issues before the people and spur men on to action; his articles were propaganda literature of the best kind, and they had a great influence on public opinion. But often he had to contend with lack of interest and enterprise on the part of his own countrymen, who did not see so clearly or look so far ahead as he. In the end, however, all recognized his services and disinterestedness. He lived as a private citizen all his life, declining to accept office from the government on condition that he gave up his political activities. He was not a man of means and this meant consequently a great sacrifice on his part. The first legislative Althing (1875) unanimously voted him an honorary annual salary for the rest of his life. He died December 7, 1879. He was a great man and a patriot in the truest and noblest sense.<sup>2</sup>

Besides political questions various other topics were discussed in the *Ný félagsrit*. Much space was devoted to agriculture and farming, representing contributions from various hands. Several

<sup>1</sup> "Ný Félagsrit hafa í svo mörgum efnum verið Alþingi ómissandi leiðarvísir, og skýrt svo fyrirfram og sundurliðað með ljósum rökum flest eða öll hin atkvæða-meiri mál, er hafa fyrir þingið komið, að segja má, að þau hafi verið rædd og undirbúin meir en til háls, áðuren þingið fékk þau til meðferðar; hefir því tímarit þetta verið fóturinn undir Alþingi í barnæsku sinni og ljós þess og stoð á svo margan veg." *Þjóðlífur* XIV, 1862, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> In his obituary on Jón Sigurðsson, Konrad Maurer writes as follows: "Als politischer Führer, als gelehrtester Kenner der isländischen Geschichte, als stets bereiter Helfer und Berather jedes einzelnen seiner Landsleute, endlich als unübertrefflicher Leiter der isländischen gelehrten Gesellschaft, wird Jón Sigurðsson in seiner Heimath auf lange hinaus schmerzlich vermisst werden. Auch im Ausland werden Viele mit Bedauern den Tod dieses Mannes vernommen haben, der in wissenschaftlichen oder anderen Fällen auch ihnen mit grösster Zuvorkommenheit zu dienen pflegte. Ich aber, der ich mit dem Verstorbenen seit dem Jahre 1856 in engem Verkehr stand und gar manche wissenschaftliche Förderung, gar manche frohe Stunde, gar manchen ernsten Freundesdienst ihm verdanke, ich betraure in ihm einen der edelsten, ehrenhaftesten und grossartigsten Männer, mit denen ich je das Glück hatte zusammengeführt zu werden." *Zur polit. Geschichte Islands*, 1880, p. 318.

articles on medical and hygienic matters are to be found there, mostly from the pen of Dr. Jón Hjaltalín, the surgeon-general of Iceland and the founder of the Medical School, who with Jón Sigurðsson brought about medical organization throughout the country. Dr. Hjaltalín also contributed two long articles on his travels in Iceland, dealing largely with minerals to be found there. Numerous reviews of books were also printed in the *Ný félagsrit*, many of them of considerable length, written chiefly by Jón Sigurðsson and Guðbrandur Vigfússon. Of foreign contributors to the periodical may be mentioned Professor Konrad Maurer, who wrote on the constitutional question and an historical essay on Icelandic commerce. Almost every volume of the *Ný félagsrit* contains a report of the decisions of the Danish Supreme Court in Icelandic cases. This came within the sphere of the relations between the two countries, and consequently fell within the scope of the periodical; nor were these decisions published anywhere else in Icelandic.

The editors had declared in their program that entertaining matter would be either left out entirely or kept within narrow limits. Consequently there is not very much in the volumes which falls within that category. Here, however, are to be classed the accounts of travels in Germany and Norway by Guðbrandur Vigfússon, and a description of papal Rome by Ólafur Gunnlögen.<sup>1</sup> And almost every volume contains one or more poems, original or translated, by Benedikt S. Gröndal, Grímur Thomsen, Gísli Brynjúlfsson, Steingrímur Thorsteinsson, and others. The translations include such poems as the *Dies iræ*, the *Stabat mater dolorosa*, a canto from Dante's *Divina Commedia*, Schiller's *Das Lied von der Glocke*, and others. In a few of the earlier volumes were portraits of prominent Icelanders, together with biographical sketches, but these number only six. Thus the *Ný félagsrit* offered their readers considerable variety, and whatever was printed was well presented.

In 1872 *Hið íslenska Þjóðvinafélag* (The Icelandic Patriotic Society) was organized; it was originally planned that this should take over the publication of the *Ný félagsrit*. This it did not do, but it started another annual on the same lines with

<sup>1</sup> There was a strong anti-Catholic feeling in Iceland at that time, and therefore some people found fault with *Ný félagsrit* for publishing this interesting essay, which they looked upon as a link in the missionary work of Djunkowsky; cf. *Þjóðólfur* X, 1858, pp. 110-111; XI, 1859, p. 67.

the title of *Andvari* which first appeared in 1874, and consequently belongs to a later period than the one treated here.

The new consultative Althing met for the first time in Reykjavík in the summer of 1845, and henceforth every other year. The transactions were published immediately after the end of each session under the title of *Tíðindi frá Alþingi*; these comprise thus fourteen volumes, down to 1873, when the last consultative assembly was held. They were edited by two members elected by the Althing,<sup>1</sup> and contain a full report of the speeches delivered at the sessions and all the bills which were introduced; each year forms a stout octavo volume.<sup>2</sup> In 1851 no regular session was held, although one was due then; the reason was that the National Convention (*Þjóðfundurinn*) met that year and its transactions were published in a separate volume: *Tíðindi frá Þjóðfundi Íslendinga árið 1851*.<sup>3</sup>

What an enterprising and energetic man was able to accomplish even in a sparsely populated rural district, was shown by Dr. Pétur Pétursson,<sup>4</sup> minister of Staðarstaður and dean of Snæfellsnessýsla, when he organized the clergy of his district, and with their support founded an annual, called *Ársrit presta í Þórsnesþingi*, of which two thin octavo volumes were printed in Reykjavík, 1846-47.<sup>5</sup> The articles in these were practically all on subjects of interest to the clergy, and most of them were doubtless written by the dean himself. In the second volume an appeal was made for a new hymn-book in the Icelandic church, on the ground that the one then in use was out of date because of changes which had taken place within the church since it had

<sup>1</sup> The editors for 1845-73 were: Jón Johnsen, 1845; Jón Sigurðsson, 1845-47; Þórður Guðmundsson, 1849; Jón Guðmundsson, 1847, 1853; Pétur Pétursson, 1853-61, 1865; Halldór Kr. Friðriksson, 1855-59, 1869-73; Páll Melsteð, 1861-63; Sveinn Skúlason, 1863-67; Jón Pétursson, 1867-71; and Egill Egilson, 1873.

<sup>2</sup> The first legislative Althing met in 1875. From that year on the transactions bear the title of *Alþingistíðindi*.

<sup>3</sup> Edited by Pétur Pétursson, Jens Sigurðsson, and Gísli Magnússon.—About the National Convention, see *Andvari* XXVII, 1902, pp. 1-34 (by Hannes Hafstein); XXXI, 1906, pp. 32-90, XXXII, 1907, pp. 146-160 (by Klemens Jónsson).

<sup>4</sup> Pétur Pétursson, born Oct. 3, 1808, died May 15, 1891; was director of the Pastoral Seminary 1847-66, bishop of Iceland 1866-89. For his life, see Þorv. Thoroddsen, *Æfisaga Pjeturs Pjeturssonar*. Reykjavík, 1908, 8°, pp. (4) + 349, portraits; and *Andvari* XVIII, 1892, pp. 1-11 (by Grímur Thomsen).

<sup>5</sup> Reviewed in *Reykjavíkurbósturinn* I, 1847, pp. 179-184.

been first introduced. Two of the articles in the annual are of historical interest, as they give descriptions of the singing in the churches and of contemporary behavior at church and during the services, but they are probably somewhat overdrawn. The annual met with considerable criticism from outside, at least two pamphlets being published in protest against certain statements in it.<sup>1</sup> It ceased to appear when Dr. Pétur Pétursson moved from the district.

In 1833 Rev. Ólafur Sívertsen and his wife Jóhanna Friðrika presented to the Flatey parish in Breiðfjörður a library of 100 volumes, with 100 ríxdalir, this being the nucleus of the so-called *Flateyjar Framfara-stíptun*, the object of which was "to spread useful knowledge, good morals, and the spirit of enterprise" among the inhabitants of the district.<sup>2</sup> In 1841 an affiliated society was organized by a few men in Flatey and the neighboring communities, called *Hið bréflega félag* (the Correspondence Society), the members of which were to write an essay or treatise annually on some topic of general interest. These were to be sent to the secretary of the society who kept them and supervised their circulation among the members.<sup>3</sup> A few years later some members of this affiliated society, which was known by the awkward name of the *Flateyjar Framfara-stofnfélags Bréflega félag*, decided to publish an annual in which, among other things, some of these essays were to be printed. Thus there appeared from the Reykjavík press in 1847 the first volume of *Ársritið Gestur Vestfirðingur*, in octavo, the first periodical, excepting the *Tíðindi frá Alþingi*, printed in Iceland in Latin type throughout.<sup>4</sup> In each of the three following years (1848-50) a new volume was forthcoming, but thereafter it was suspended, until in 1855 the fifth and last volume was issued from a Copenhagen printing

<sup>1</sup> About the *Ársrit* and the pamphlets, see Thoroddsen, *Æfisaga P. P.*, pp. 36-53.

<sup>2</sup> See *Lovs. f. Isl.* X, pp. 565-567 (Oct. 3, 1834); cf. XVII pp. 665-666 (Oct. 13, 1859). See also *Sunnanpósturinn* I, 1835, pp. 190-191; *Þjóðólfur* XII, 1859-60, pp. 30-31, 41-42, 45-46. Three reports of the Flatey Foundation with a catalogue of the library were printed in 1842, 1844, and 1858 (cf. *Bibl. Not.* I, 132 and 135; *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.*, pp. 158-159).

<sup>3</sup> About the organization of this society, see the first report of the Flatey Foundation (1842), pp. 5-6; the by-laws were printed in the second report (1844), pp. 11-14.

<sup>4</sup> Like the *Skírnis* it has a stanza on the title-page:  
 "Hef þú nú, Gestur, gaungu þína fróðleiks og menta frömuður vertu,  
 um fósturfold, og fréttir tjáðu; kurteys með einurð kynn hið sanna."

office. The *Gestur Vestfirðingur* was edited by a board consisting as a rule of four members.<sup>1</sup> Most of the volumes, apparently in imitation of the arrangement in the *Fjölmiðir*, were divided into three sections, one containing news, the second miscellaneous matters, and the third essays. The news section dealt exclusively with the Western Province and took its beginning from the year where *Sunnanpósturinn* had stopped; it is on the whole well written. The miscellaneous part consists of various minor items, some of a controversial character, while in practically all the volumes the essays treat of economical questions, like farming, fishing, and commerce; some of them are in the form of a dialogue.<sup>2</sup> In the last volume are to be found biographies of Hallgrímur Pétursson, the hymnologist, and Ólafur Snóksdalín, the genealogist, by Gísli Konráðsson, who at the invitation of the Flatey Foundation had taken up his residence in Flatey and whose writings subsequently became the property of the foundation. It was the intention of the editors to continue the annual, but no more was ever printed.

After the disappearance of *Sunnanpósturinn* at the end of 1838, no periodical of a general character saw the light in Reykjavík for the next eight years. Chief-justice Þórður Sveinbjörnsson had planned a juridico-political quarterly which was to be published by the Superior Court, but it failed to materialize;<sup>3</sup> and thereafter Tómas Sæmundsson, together with Ólafur Stephensen of Viðey and others, proposed to issue a quarterly in which among other things were to be printed the proceedings

<sup>1</sup> The editors were Ólafur Sívertsen, vols. 1-5; Brynjúlfur Benedictsen, 1-5; Eiríkur Kúld, 1-5; Guðmundur Einarsson, 1-3; Jón P. Thoroddsen, 5. — Ólafur Sívertsen was probably the principal contributor, cf. Erslew, *Forfatter Lexicon*, Supplem. III, pp. 188-189. He was born May 24, 1790, and died May 27, 1860; see *Stutt æfíngrip Ólafs Sívertsens*. Reykjavík, 1862, 8°, pp. 31.

<sup>2</sup> In one of the dialogues, the anonymous writer makes a farmer express his opinion about the periodicals then current, in the following way: "Reykjavíkurbóst-greyið er þó skást, því hann er fréttafróðastur. Alþingistíðindin eru tómur hrægrautur og stapp, sem einginn botnar í. Þjóðólfr er mest-megnis að deila á aðra. Lanztíðindin þekki eg að eingu, en heyrst hefi eg á máli manna, að þau séu kostalétt. Félagsritin nýu eru ekki sem verst, þó eru í þeim öfgar, sem ná eingri átt; eg held, að þeir, sem skrifa þau, haldi, að við Íslendingar séum almáttugir, og hver bóndi í Papeyjarbuxum (verði aldrei févana). Gestur er heldur ekki upp á marga fiska, og ekki fyrir sauðsvarta almúgann töfíuverkið í honum, þegar prestarnir okkar sumir hverjir fara jafnnærir frá að skilja það. Ritin þau arna eru ekki til annars en draga út peninga" (vol. IV, pp. 78-79).

<sup>3</sup> See the letter from Árni Helgason quoted above, p. 51, note 5.

of the meetings of the Committee of Government Officials, but this also proved abortive through a disagreement between the prospective supporters.<sup>1</sup> Unwillingness to co-operate prevented the carrying out of any further schemes of the sort,<sup>2</sup> until finally Páll Melsteð<sup>3</sup> and his brother, Sigurður Melsteð,<sup>4</sup> together with Þórður Jónasson,<sup>5</sup> associate judge of the Superior Court, entered into a partnership to publish and edit a monthly paper. Thus *Reykjavíkurbósturinn* was founded, which ran for three years, from October 1846, to September 1849, and was published in monthly numbers of sixteen pages in octavo. Sigurður Melsteð severed his relations with it at the end of the first year; the second year was edited by the other two, while the third year was edited by Þórður Jónasson alone, except that Páll Melsteð appeared by name as editor of the last two numbers (Aug.-Sept., 1849). *Reykjavíkurbósturinn* was the best newspaper which down to that time had appeared in Iceland, and it was doubtless due to Páll Melsteð that the news sections were so extensive and well written. This was his first entrance into journalism; he returned to it from time to time, and the papers which he was connected with always maintained high standards. His contributions to this paper were probably quite a few. *Reykjavíkurbósturinn* published several good articles on various topics, both original and translated. Legal matters were treated by Þórður Jónasson, and different questions of the day were discussed there by several contributors. To political matters considerable space was devoted, but the paper was of a conservative tone and gave utterance to Þórður Jónasson's own

<sup>1</sup> Tómas Sæmundsson, *Bréf*, 1907, pp. 270-271, 280-281, 284-285; Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf*, 1911, p. 20; Páll Melsteð, *Bréf til Jóns Sigurðssonar*, 1913, pp. 3, 8, 11, 13; *Lovs. f. Isl.* XI, p. 701.

<sup>2</sup> Páll Melsteð, *Bréf til Jóns Sigurðssonar*, 1913, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Páll (Pálsson) Melsteð, born Nov. 13, 1812, died Feb. 9, 1910. He occupied various positions; for a long time he was teacher of history in the College. About his life, see especially his own *Endurminningar*, Copenhagen, 1912, 8°, pp. viii + 118, with portraits; *Andvari XXXVI*, pp. 1-21 (by Bogi Th. Melsteð); Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. II, p. 359; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon*, XI, pp. 257-258.

<sup>4</sup> Sigurður Melsteð, born Dec. 12, 1819, died May 20, 1895. He was long director of the Pastoral Seminary. See *Kirkjublaðið V*, 1895, pp. 125-126; *Minningarrit 50 ára afmælis Prestaskóla Íslands*, 1897, pp. 8-10, with portrait; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. II, pp. 361-362.

<sup>5</sup> Þórður Jónasson (or Jónassen) born Feb. 26, 1800, died Aug. 25, 1877; chief-justice from 1856 to 1877. See Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon VIII*, p. 528; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. I, p. 967.

views. He was probably somewhat domineering towards the other editors and that led to difficulties.<sup>1</sup>

Two young poets living in Copenhagen, Gísli Brynjúlfsson<sup>2</sup> and Jón Þórðarson Thoroddsen,<sup>3</sup> had in the year 1848 decided to publish a booklet containing poems and essays on the liberal arts with the exclusion of everything connected with national and international politics. In the meantime, however, the February revolution broke out in Paris and disturbances and revolutionary movements spread from there to most European countries. In view of this the editors made in the contents of their publication a compromise between poetry and contemporary events, and put side by side dreams and realities, at the same time hoping that their booklet might develop into an annual. This was the *Norðurfari*, of which only two volumes were printed, 1848-49. They contain a number of poems, chiefly by the editors, and some translated stories, like Franklin's *The whistle*. Jón Thoroddsen contributed a short story entitled *Ferðasaga*, but otherwise almost all his contributions were poems. The editors wrote in collaboration a political article, printed in volume two, in which they strongly advocated autonomy for Iceland under a common king with Denmark. The other prose writings are from the pen of Gísli Brynjúlfsson. His first essay dealt with the University of Copenhagen as a place of study for future Icelandic officials, in which he pointed out its disadvantages in various respects and the desirability of professional schools located in Iceland. This involved him in a controversy with *Reykjavíkurljósturinn*.<sup>4</sup> By far the larger part of the two volumes of the

<sup>1</sup> See Páll Melsteð, *Endurminningar* 1912, p. 70, and his *Bréf til Jóns Sig.* 1913, pp. 68, 71, 81-82; Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf*, 1911, pp. 123-124, 139-140.

<sup>2</sup> Gísli (Gíslason) Brynjúlfsson, born Sept. 3, 1827, died May 29, 1888. He was docent of Icelandic history and literature in the University of Copenhagen from 1874. His *Ljóðmáli* were published in Copenhagen 1891. For his life, see *Sunnarfari* V, pp. 73-75, with portrait; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. I, pp. 262-263; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* III, p. 190; *Historisch-politische Blätter* (München), CII. Bd., pp. 757-762 (by Alex. Baumgartner).

<sup>3</sup> Jón P. Thoroddsen, poet and novelist, born Oct. 5, 1819, died March 8, 1868. His first novel *Piltur og stúlka* was printed in 1850, his *Kvæði* in 1871, and his unfinished novel *Maður og kona* in 1876, with a biography of the author by Jón Sigurðsson. See also Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. III, pp. 412-413; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVII, pp. 282-283; *Sunnarfari* XI, pp. 53-54, with portrait; *New Englander and Yale Review* X, 1887, pp. 469-476 (by W. H. Carpenter).

<sup>4</sup> *Reykjavíkurljósturinn* II, pp. 177-184; III, pp. 121-131 (by O[ddgeir] St[e]phensen), cf. P. Pétursson's protest, III, pp. 6-8. Gísli Brynjúlfsson's reply was printed in vol. II of *Norðurfari*.

*Norðurfari* is filled with an account of the revolutionary movements of those years, by Gísli Brynjúlfsson. It is written with enthusiasm for the cause of liberalism; he dwells at length upon the revolution in Hungary; the cause of the Magyars was especially close to his heart at that time and long afterwards.<sup>1</sup> He also shows admiration for England and the United States wherever he has occasion to mention them. To make his readers fully understand the narrative, the author preceded it in the second volume by a long exposition of the different races and nationalities in Europe. In this volume is also to be found a list of Icelandic books published in 1845-48, with some remarks on the literature of the day. The volumes of the *Norðurfari* are attractive in appearance, if one overlooks the numerous misprints in the first, and they make entertaining and instructive reading. It is to be regretted that no more appeared.

The revolutionary movement of 1848 is reflected in various ways in the literature of Iceland, but it is of especial interest to us in this connection as having given rise to the first real newspaper there, a paper which for a long time remained the principal organ of the political opposition. On January 20, 1848, King Christian the Eighth died and was succeeded by his son, Frederick the Seventh. In announcing his accession to the throne the new king gave his subjects a promise of a liberal constitution, a matter that was further explained in a government letter of Jan. 28, and according to which Iceland was to take no part in the convention which was to be called together for adopting a constitution for Denmark and the Duchies. This was gratifying to the Icelanders, but their joy was of a short duration, as the law of elections for the Danish convention, dated July 7, 1848, provided that there should be five members representing Iceland and that these were to be selected by the king, if possible from the members of the Althing. This news caused considerable stir in Iceland, and exaggerated reports of the popular dissatisfaction there soon reached the Danish capital.<sup>2</sup> The Icelanders finally decided to send a petition to the king, asking him to allow them at least to elect their representatives in the convention. This the government refused by a letter of Sept. 23, 1848, declaring

<sup>1</sup> See his various poems on the Magyars from the years 1848-49, *Kvæði* 1891, pp. 121-150, and the last from ca. 1866, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Ný fálagsrit* IX, p. 34.



that it would delay the convocation of the Constitutional Convention, and, considering the threatening conditions in the Duchies, any postponement was inadvisable; but the letter, on the other hand, announced the intention of the king that no binding constitutional regulations should be adopted so far as Iceland's own internal affairs were concerned until a convention in that country had been consulted. This declaration was received with satisfaction, and the people awaited further action in fulfillment of the king's promises. At that time there was only one periodical published in Reykjavík, the monthly *Reykjavíkurpósturinn*, a cautious, conservative organ, and then tottering. Páll Melsteð left it at the end of September 1848, and soon conceived the idea of starting a new paper which he was to edit and three citizens of Reykjavík were to publish.<sup>1</sup> Before the arrangements regarding the new enterprise were finished, Páll Melsteð was obliged to leave Reykjavík on official duty, and he put the matter therefore into the hands of Sveinbjörn Hallgrímsson, an assistant pastor of a neighboring parish.<sup>2</sup> He completed the plans for publication, and on November 5, 1848, the first number of *Pjóðólfur*<sup>3</sup> appeared in Reykjavík, a four-page paper in quarto; it was to be published fortnightly. The editor addressed himself to the public in a long editorial, where he said that these were times when people ought to be awake and on guard, and he openly declared in favor of a national government for Iceland and full freedom of trade. This he followed up with other articles in support of the liberal movement, attacking the government and criticizing the general conduct or individual actions of government officials. The paper immediately aroused hostility in official circles, as was to be expected, and in the second year of its existence the authorities tried to prevent its publication by excluding it from the printing office, the only one

<sup>1</sup> These were Egill Jónsson, the bookbinder, Einar Þórðarson, and Helgi Helgason, printers. Their connection with the paper lasted only one year, whereafter Sveinbjörn Hallgrímsson became the owner as well as the editor of it.

<sup>2</sup> Sveinbjörn Hallgrímsson, born Sept. 25, 1815, was a nephew of Sveinbjörn Egilsson; died as pastor of Glæsibær, Jan. 1, 1863. . For his life, see *Norðanfari* II, pp. 8, 16; *Pjóðólfur* I, p. 207, portr.; *Óðinn* III, pp. 72-73, portr.; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Suppl. I, pp. 648-649; Bricka, *Dansk. biograf. Lexikon* VI, pp. 516-517.

<sup>3</sup> The paper was named after one of the characters in the *Ármann á Alþingi*, the conservative *Pjóðólfur*; the name does not therefore seem particularly well chosen for a liberal paper.

# PJÓÐÓLFUR.

1848.

1. Ár.

5. Nóvember.

1.

*Gud gef yður góðan dag!*

Vjer getum ekki neitað því, að það hefur lengi verið svo að orði kveðið um oss Íslendinga, að vjer svæfum og þyrftum endilega að vakna. Og vjer getum ekki heldur borið á móti því, að það hafa hljómað til vor raddir, sem hafa eins og haft það mark og mið, að vekja oss af þessum svefni. Skyldi það nú ekki vera þess vert, að skoða, hvað meint muni vera með þessum svefni, og undir eipa tilvinnandi, að gefa þeim röddum gaum, sem hafa tekið sig saman um það, að vekja þjóðina af honum? Þegar vjer þá heyrum þetta utan að oss: mikið sofið þjer, Íslendingar! er þá meiningin sú, að vjer sjemur út af dauðir í yfirtroddalum? eða þegar vjer heyrum hróp að til vor: vaknið þjer, nú, Íslendingar! eigum vjer þá að skilja það hróp í sömu meiningu, og þetta ávarp hjá sálmaskáldinu: vaknið upp, kristnir allir, og sjáið syndum við! Jeg fyrir mitt leyti held, að vjer eigum ekki að skilja þetta á þá leið. Það er samt engan veginn meining mín, að vjer Íslendingar þarfum þess ekki með, að beyra neinar raddir, sem hrópi til vor af öllu allri, að vjerakulum vakna af svefni syndanna, og láta ljós orða Kristis lýsa æ betur og betur á vegum vorum. Hverjum getur dottuð í hug, að segja oss svo góða! Engum, sem þekkir oss. Vjer erum í því tilliti, eins og aðrir bræður vorir í heiminum, hvorki heitir nje kaldir, heldur hálfvolgir eða hálfsofandi; vjer höfum, þegar best lætur, viljann til hins góða, en oss vantar styrkleikann til að framkvæma það. Og það vantar ekki, það hljóma si og æ fyrir eyrum vorum frá þjedikunarstólum þjer raddirnar, sem brýna fyrir oss, hvað til fríðar vors heyrir í þessu efni. Með þeim svefninum, sem hjer ræðir um, mun þá heldur

meint vera deyft á þjóðlyndinu; mók á þjóðarandanum, svefna á þjóðlífinu. Og þjer raddir, sem jeg segi að hafi eins og tekið sig fram um það, að vekja þjóðina af þessum svefni, þjer hljóma ekki frá þjedikunarstólum; þjer hafa komið til vor langan veg að; þjer hafa horizt oss utan af hafi. Og hvað meina nú þessar raddir, þegar þjer kveða svo að orði við oss: sofið nú ekki lengur Íslendingar, heldur vaknið! Jeg held, að þjer meina hjer um bil þetta: lauð það ekki lengur dyljast fyrir yður, að þjer erud þjóð út af fyrir yður! leyfið ekki, að þjóðerni yðar renni burt og tynist innaf um hinat þjóðirnar! Látið yður ekki einu gilda, hvort þjer verðið t. a. m. Rússar eða Prússar eða hvað! Heldur sjáið það sjálfur, að þjer eigið veglegt þjóðerni að verja, að yður byrjar að fá ást á þjóðsfelegi yðar, að þjer megið ekki hugsa til að verða neitt: annað, en sannir Íslendingar! Eins og þá raddirnar frá þjedikunarstólum láta sjer annat um, að vekja oss af svefni syndanna, og gleða hjá oss Kristilegan anda, svo reyna líka raddirnar utan af hafinu til, að vekja oss af dvala hugsunarleysis og hiru-leysis um þjóðerni vort, og láta sjer annat um að gleða hjá oss þjóðlegan anda. En hver rök eru til þess, að jeg segi raddir þessar úr hafi komnar? Mjer virðist sem þjer gætu ekki komið úr landinu sjálfu. Eða skyldi það ekki fara eptir líkum lögum með hverju þjóð, sem sefur, og sjalsar ekkert um þjóðerni sitt, eins og með hvern einstakum manni; sem sefur og veit ekki neitt af sjálfum sjer? Sá, sem sefur, getur ekki vaknið eigi sjálfur, heldur hljóta að koma utan að honum annarstáð frá hróp eða hnippar, eigi hann að vakna á vissum tíma. Eins held jeg, að sje með þjóðina; meðan hún sefur, get-

The first page of the *Pjóðólfur* (reduced).

in the country at the time being public property and under government control. But at once the editor, with the support of some friends, went to Copenhagen and had there printed a double number of the paper, which he called *Hljóðólfur* (II, nos. 30-31, April 25, 1850), and at the same time appealed his case to the Danish minister of justice, who rescinded the action of the Icelandic officials, but without giving the editor any indemnity.<sup>1</sup> The paper was then again printed in the Reykjavík press, but the editor had to pay in advance the cost of printing; and during the latter half of the year 1851 no number of the paper was printed, the editor having hurried to finish the third volume before the end of June of that year, doubtless because he feared that there was not smooth sailing ahead. Sveinbjörn Hallgrímsson edited the *Pjóðólfur* until November 1852, when the fourth volume was completed. During his editorship it was a strong opposition paper. He had on frequent occasions shown considerable journalistic ability. He had many qualities of the agitator; his articles were fiery and well adapted to arouse people, but sometimes they were too longwinded and wordy and showed a lack of good taste; nor was his wit as a rule successful. But the paper doubtless served a useful purpose at the time. Most of the subject matter bore directly or indirectly on the political questions then uppermost in people's mind. The paper published, for instance, translations of the French and the Norwegian constitutional laws and other similar things which might serve to guide its readers with reference to their own national affairs. The editor himself seems to have leaned towards republicanism; he at least favored a suspensive veto for the king. News items were rather limited in the paper, and articles on other subjects than political questions were mostly contributed from outside.

With the beginning of volume five (November, 1852) Jón Guðmundsson<sup>2</sup> became owner and editor of the *Pjóðólfur*, and so he remained for more than twenty years. Under his direc-

<sup>1</sup> *Lous. f. Isl.* XIV, p. 641 (Dec. 12, 1850).

<sup>2</sup> Jón Guðmundsson was born Dec. 10, 1807, and graduated from the Bessastaðir School in 1832. For his life and work, see *Andvari* VII, pp. 1-17 (by Þorvaldur Björnsson) with portrait; *Pjóðólfur* I, p. 207, portr.; *Óðinn* III, p. 72, portr.; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* Supplem. I, pp. 612-613; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VI, pp. 280-281; *Ísafold* XXXIV, p. 305; *Lögretta* II, p. 229; *Reykjavík* VIII, p. 275.

tion the paper acquired stability and firmness so that it gradually became the leading newspaper in the country. He soon enlarged it; for several years there were published forty numbers annually, and from 1862 these were increased to forty-eight, besides a few extra numbers. The number of subscribers which at the time of the change of ownership was about 700 or a little above, was increased afterwards to some 1200; it remained stationary at that figure for the rest of the period. Jón Guðmundsson was the sole editor all this time, except that Páll Melsteð was listed for some time as assistant editor (1865-67), but he never took an active part in the management of the paper, as the two did not agree.<sup>1</sup> Halldór Kr. Friðriks-son twice acted as an editor in the absence of the owner (1868-69, 1873-74).<sup>2</sup> When Jón Guðmundsson entered upon his journalistic career he had acquired much experience in politics. He had been a member of the Althing since its re-establishment, and he also had a seat in the National Convention of 1851. He was one of the three members chosen by the representatives to present to the king the address of protest against the conduct of Count Trampe, the governor-general. He was at that time prefect of Skaptafellssýsla, but without hesitation he accepted the mission entrusted to him by his fellow members and went to Copenhagen. This led to his dismissal from office, and he was never again appointed to any government position, excepting that of attorney at the Superior Court. He associated himself with Jón Sigurðsson and his party, and he was one of this political leader's staunchest supporters until they disagreed about the financial settlement between Iceland and Denmark during the session of the Althing in 1865. Being the editor of the most widely-read paper in the country, Jón Guðmundsson's services to the party were, of course, of the greatest importance. He was unsparing in his criticism of the authorities whenever there was good reason for such; on certain occasions his utterances may have been unnecessarily sharp; at other times they were well-applied and had a wholesome effect. The government officials were naturally rather hostile to the paper and showed

<sup>1</sup> See Páll Melsteð, *Bréf til Jóns Sigurðssonar* 1913, p. 121; *Pjóðólfur* XX, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Pjóðólfur* XXI, Nos. 9-23; XXVI, Nos. 6-21.



JÓN GUÐMUNDSSON



their displeasure in various ways;<sup>1</sup> they frequently supported or started competing papers. The privilege of printing official announcements was, however, given to it,<sup>2</sup> but that was presumably because this was the only paper at the time in which such things could be published. Jón Guðmundsson was a man of strong character and unusual energy, had firm convictions and was persistent in every thing he undertook. But he had a poor pen; his style was clumsy and lacked clearness; the sentences were long and foreign in their construction; his opponents often properly made fun of certain expressions and phrases in the *Pjóðólfur*.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless his contributions to the paper had weight and substance and commanded attention, and there is no question about the influence which they exercised upon the people. Another thing which appealed to the public was the regularity with which the paper appeared, and the great pains which the editor took to distribute it quickly, a serious problem at that time when means of communication were so bad in the country.<sup>4</sup> The paper published numerous contributions from outside; some of them were long and had therefore to be published in installments; it would sometimes be months before the whole article was printed so the readers had to exercise patience as well as to train their memories under such conditions. These contributions were not paid for, although upon taking over the paper the editor had offered a remuneration for original poems and stories—one to two ríxdalir a page. The news columns in the paper were as good as could be expected, since domestic news had, as a rule, to be gathered in a haphazard way, there being, of course, no organized news service. The foreign news was well reported, the correspondents abroad being such men as Jón A. Hjaltalín, Guðbrandur Vigfússon, and Björn M. Ólsen. Thus the *Pjóðólfur* became a popular paper with an established reputation which enabled it to stand the competition of other and in some respects better papers. That it was always

<sup>1</sup> Thus the chief-justice of the Superior Court refused to give the editor a copy of the decisions of the court for publication in the paper. The cost of printing had also to be paid in advance, and occasionally attempts were made to supervise the contents of the numbers (cf. *Lövs. f. Isl.* XVIII, p. 306, Jan. 22, 1862).

<sup>2</sup> *Lövs. f. Isl.* XVII, pp. 591–592 (June 27, 1859); cf. also pp. 480–482.

<sup>3</sup> See e. g. *Vikverji* I, pp. 133–134.

<sup>4</sup> See *Nordanfari* III, p. 43.

in opposition to the government doubtless carried weight with the people and contributed to its popularity. Jón Guðmundsson finally sold it in 1874 to Matthías Jochumsson, who continued it on somewhat different lines.<sup>1</sup> Jón Guðmundsson is really the founder of Icelandic journalism and in various ways might serve as a model for the profession. He died on May 31, 1875.

It was evident in the summer of 1849 that the days of *Reykjavík-urpósturinn* were numbered, and in view of the aggressive conduct of the *Pjóðólfur*, the higher government officials and their followers found it very desirable to have a paper which could present their views on the various questions which were then under discussion. Of course, no political parties in the true sense existed at that time in Iceland, and interests and opinions were chiefly determined by the social and official position of the individual. Through the agency of the highest authorities in Reykjavík the fortnightly *Lanztíðindi* was founded, under the editorship of Dr. Pétur Pétursson, then director of the Pastoral Seminary. The first number was published on Sept. 3, 1849, four pages in quarto, and the paper was continued for nearly two years, the last number appearing on May 5, 1851. The forty-nine numbers form two volumes, each with a separate title-page, but with continuous pagination. In the introductory article of the first number the editor dwelt upon the necessity of newspapers and periodicals in general, and showed the desirability of having more than one paper in the Icelandic capital. The program of the paper he declared to be that of supporting every thing which in any way might further the progress and prosperity of the country; the principal news from home and abroad was likewise to be published in its pages. He announced that the paper would gladly open its columns to articles expressing opinions different from those of the paper, provided they were well written. Most of the contents of the two volumes have direct or indirect reference to the questions which were to be discussed in the National Convention which was soon to be convoked, in particular the questions of constitution and freedom of trade.

<sup>1</sup> For the history of the *Pjóðólfur*, see the memorial number of the paper published on the fiftieth anniversary, Nov. 5, 1898 (I, Nos. 51-52); also Páll Melsteð, *Endurminningar* 1912, pp. 70-71, 72; *Pjóðólfur* XL, No. 51.—*Pjóðólfur* was published until Jan. 26, 1912 (LXIV, No. 3) and then it was supposed to be permanently discontinued, but in 1917 it was resurrected at Stokkseyri, and later transferred to Reykjavík, where it is still running.



The editor naturally supported the demand for a constitution, but he was reserved in his utterances and the more so as time went on, the reason being, as has been claimed, that he, on the one hand, knew of a change of feeling in Copenhagen governmental circles unfavorable to the granting of a separate constitution, and that, on the other hand, he was apprehensive of the agitation in Iceland and the extravagant demands made by certain people there.<sup>1</sup> He also represented a rather conservative standpoint as to freedom of trade, and seems to have favored certain restrictions or control in the matter. Before the National Convention met he retired from the editorship and that brought about the discontinuation of the paper. Dr. Pétur Pétursson was doubtless the best man available for directing a government paper, and it had a wide circulation during the first year of its existence, chiefly, it may be presumed, on account of the editor's reputation.<sup>2</sup> In the second year the subscriptions fell off, because, as the *Pjóðólfur* put it, it had not lived up to popular expectations. People had supposed it would publish governmental reports and other statements regarding the administration of the country and of the various institutions; in this they were deceived and they soon realized that they were left in the dark as before.<sup>3</sup> This explanation seems plausible, and it may be added that the political attitude of the paper always disclosed half-heartedness and bore a striking similarity to the conduct of the majority of the representatives selected by the crown in the National Convention—as might be expected, since they were chosen from the group which stood behind the *Lanztiðindi*. Of other matters contained in this paper, the long and feeble story *Böðvar og Ásta*, by Magnús Grímsson, may be mentioned; it was printed in volume two.

The *Lanztiðindi* was soon followed by another paper of the same or a similar policy but of less prominence. This was the *Ný tðindi*, the first number of which appeared on Dec. 24, 1851, and the last on Dec. 16, 1852; thus twenty-two four-page numbers in quarto were published. The choice of editor was not so fortunate

<sup>1</sup> See P. Thoroddsen, *Æfisaga Péturs Péturssonar* 1908, pp. 96-127.

<sup>2</sup> Jakob Guðmundsson was also closely connected with the paper, cf. Gísli Thorarson, *Ljóðmali*, Reykjavík, 1885, pp. 43, 158.

<sup>3</sup> See *Pjóðólfur* V, pp. 30-31.

as in the former case. Magnús Grímsson,<sup>1</sup> the editor of *Ný iðindi*, was a young theologian of some literary talent, who hitherto had taken no interest in public affairs, a man of little experience who was anything but fit for editing a political paper. In his address to the public, printed in the first number, he declared that the aim of the paper was to acquaint the readers with different opinions on public questions, and to print news and other instructive matter. He hoped that the government would permit him<sup>2</sup> to publish official reports and decisions concerning the administration of the country, so that the people might know these and read them undistorted—a sly thrust at the *Pjóðólfur*. He knew, he said, that it often caused dissatisfaction and misunderstandings between the government and the people, when the latter were not given an opportunity to inform themselves properly about the actions of the former. In a later article (March, 1852) the editor expressed his satisfaction over the reception accorded to his paper; in three months four hundred subscribers had been found in the southern part of the country; he also said that many had advised him to make his paper as similar to *Klausturpósturinn* as possible, but in this he hardly could expect to succeed, where other more experienced men had failed. The paper printed only a few political articles, but it actually published many government letters, ordinances, decisions of the courts, and the like. It defended the authorities against the attacks of the *Pjóðólfur*, especially in the controversy about the College.<sup>3</sup> Most of the articles were contributions from outside and the editor seems to have written comparatively little. The news reports were not very satisfactory.

A third effort to establish a paper in Reykjavík in opposition to the *Pjóðólfur* was made in the year 1853. On Jan. 12 of that year there appeared the first number of the *Ingólfur*,<sup>4</sup> under the editorship of Sveinbjörn Hallgrímsson, the former editor of the

<sup>1</sup> Magnús Grímsson, born June 3, 1825, died as minister of Mosfell, Jan. 18, 1860. He is best known as Jón Árnason's collaborator in collecting and editing Icelandic folk-tales. For his life, see *Sunnmanfari* V, pp. 57-59, portr.; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VI, p. 203; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* Supplem. I, pp. 584-585.

<sup>2</sup> It was of course easily obtained since the paper was subsidized by the government; cf. *Pjóðólfur* IV, p. 295.

<sup>3</sup> For criticism of the *Ný iðindi*, see *Pjóðólfur* V, pp. 9-13, 17-19, 29-30.

<sup>4</sup> It was named after Ingólfur Arnarson, the first settler of Reykjavík.

*Þjóðólfur*. Up to May 30, 1855, when the last number was issued, twenty-seven numbers were printed, each of four or eight pages in quarto.<sup>1</sup> It was no little surprise to Jón Guðmundsson to see the father of his own paper thus go over to the other camp. Consequently there were perpetual quarrels and controversies between the two papers; Sveinbjörn Hallgrímsson was especially violent in his attacks, and his controversial articles were frequently in bad taste. The *Ingólfur* represents many of the same qualities as the *Þjóðólfur* during its first four years, with the difference that the editor now defended what he then had attacked or criticized. One of the most interesting things in the *Ingólfur* is a series of articles on Reykjavík. When it ceased no further attempts were made for some years to start another paper in Reykjavík.

In 1850-51, prior to session of the National Convention, Halldór Kr. Friðriksson and Jakob Guðmundsson edited *Undirbúningsblað undir þjóðfundinn að sumri 1851*. It was published in six quarto numbers of eight pages each, of which the first and the last numbers were printed in Reykjavík and the rest in Copenhagen. The paper was founded pursuant to a decision of the Conference at Thingvellir in 1850. Its contents consisted almost entirely of propositions and reports from the various district committees regarding the questions to be discussed at the Convention; it also published a summary of the proceedings of the two Conferences at Thingvellir in 1850 and 1851.

The unusually great number of subscribers to the *Árrit Prestaskólans* shows clearly the reading public's great interest in religious matters about the middle of the nineteenth century. A prospectus had been sent out and no less than 750 subscriptions were received in advance. The first and only volume of this *Árrit*, written and edited by Dr. Pétur Pétursson and Sigurður Melsteð, was printed in Reykjavík 1850, an octavo volume of some 200 pages. Besides a report on the Pastoral Seminary, it included two sermons, articles on religious movements within the German Church (by Professor Wiggers), and on the sacraments (by Bishop Martensen), a biography of Bishop Guðbrandur Þorláksson, a circular letter from the bishop of Iceland

<sup>1</sup> According to *Þjóðólfur* VI, pp. 196-197, there were printed 500 copies of the *Ingólfur*. Cf. also *Þjóðólfur* V, pp. 30-32.

to the deans, and a resumé of some recent theological books—contents which, all in all, one would hardly have expected the general public to take much interest in. The volume became immediately the object of bitter attacks, both on account of its style and because of certain opinions expressed in its pages.<sup>1</sup> It was probably due to these that no more was published.

The Northlanders, to their great sorrow, had in 1799 been deprived of the Hólar printing office, but under the conditions then prevalent in the country they could do nothing but acquiesce in the dispositions of the government. With the political and intellectual awakening about the middle of the nineteenth century the need of a printing press in that part of the country was again felt and with it a desire for a periodical. This movement was headed by Björn Jónsson, formerly a farmer, but at that time a business manager in Akureyri.<sup>2</sup> He collaborated with several others and subscriptions were collected for buying a press. Royal permission was granted April 14, 1852,<sup>3</sup> and in the same year the whole printing outfit arrived at Akureyri. Being bought through popular subscriptions the press was looked upon as public property of the Northern and Eastern Provinces and was under the direction of a board of managers.<sup>4</sup> With the beginning of the following year (1853) a fortnightly paper, called *Norðri*, was started; it was issued for some time in twenty-four double numbers of eight pages in quarto, and was thus really a monthly. The editors were Björn Jónsson and Jón Jónsson of Munkaþverá, a member of the Althing.<sup>5</sup> The latter retired from the paper at the end of the first year, although his name still appeared as editor on the first five numbers of the second year. The principal aim of the periodical was to publish domestic and foreign news, especially every thing relating to the Northern and Eastern Provinces; in addition to that it was to contain

<sup>1</sup> See *Þjóðólfur* II, pp. 140–143 (signed: Jeg); reply, pp. 159–160, 163–165 (signed: 36 + 7); rejoinder by Jeg, pp. 166–168, 170–172, 181–184.—*Lanzáðindi* II, pp. 109–110, by P. Pétursson. See also P. Thoroddsen, *Æfissaga P. Péturssonar* 1908, pp. 79–82.

<sup>2</sup> Björn Jónsson, born May 12, 1802, died June 20, 1886; was a member of the National Convention of 1851. For his life see *Óðinn* III, pp. 73, 102, portr.; *Ísafold* XIII, p. 118; Jóh. Kristjánsson, *Alþingismannatal* 1906, p. 13; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. I, p. 969.

<sup>3</sup> *Lovs. f. Isl.* XV, pp. 226–227.

<sup>4</sup> For the history of the press, see Jón Jónsson (Borgfirðingur), *Sögugrip um prentsmiðjur og prentara á Íslandi* 1867, pp. 54–65.

<sup>5</sup> Jón Jónsson, born March 13, 1804, died Jan. 22, 1859; see Jóh. Kristjánsson, *Alþingismannatal* 1906, pp. 34–35.

articles on all sorts of subjects, and these generally filled a far greater portion of its pages than the news items. The matters chiefly dealt with were of an economic and commercial character. During Björn Jónsson's editorship very few editorial contributions were published, and the standpoint of the paper on the questions of the day was not clearly defined. After three years, Sveinn Skúlason,<sup>1</sup> who had for some time been a student in the University of Copenhagen, bought the paper and became the editor of it in June, 1856.<sup>2</sup> Under him it improved greatly, its editorial policy became more pronounced and in line with that of the liberal party. Although the *Norðri* in most respects was of the same political color as its southern contemporary, the *Pjóðólfur*, frequent squabbles took place between them. The editor wrote a great deal for the paper, and some of his articles are of interest, such as the account of his travels through the Northern and Eastern Provinces. There are many reviews of books to be found in its columns, and feuilletons were introduced, mostly consisting of translated stories and historical narratives, among them, for instance, selections from Washington Irving's *Mahomet*. Much space was occupied by discussions on the affairs of the Akureyri press. Some heated articles were published there on the homeopathic method in medicine, which found adherents among some noted men in that part of the country, and which was attacked by Dr. Hjaltalín. Among the frequent contributors to the paper were Rev. Einar Thorlacius, author of articles and poems, and Rev. Sigurður Gunnarsson of Hallormsstaður. With the fifth year (1857) the paper was enlarged so as to include thirty-six annual numbers, but it seems never to have had a wide circulation, and the editor had a hard struggle to keep it going. The last number (vol. IX, Nos. 35-36) is dated Dec. 31, 1861, the paper thus having had a run of nine years.

At the suggestion of Gísli Brynjúlfsson, the Copenhagen section of the Icelandic Literary Society in 1851 decided to publish a magazine which was to contain historical writings, documents and deeds, poems of earlier and recent times with commentaries, and treatises, old and new, concerning ancient

<sup>1</sup> Sveinn Skúlason, born April 12, 1824, died as minister of Kirkjubær in Hróarstunga May 21, 1888. See *Óðinn* III, p. 73, portr.; Jóh. Kristjánsson, *Alþingismannatal* 1906, p. 62; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexikon* Supplem. III, pp. 194-195, 772; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVI, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Björn Jónsson edited in Sv. Skúlason's absence Nos. 3-13 of vol. IV.

and modern Icelandic literature and history.<sup>1</sup> A committee of three was elected by the society to pass on the writings which were sent in for publication. In 1853 the first part of the magazine, with the title of *Safn til sögu Íslands og íslenskra bókmenta að fornu og nýju*, was published, the second part in 1855, and the third in 1856, completing the first volume. The first and second parts of volume two appeared in 1860 and 1861 respectively, but the third was not printed until 1876, and the volume was at last completed in 1886. Two other volumes have since that time been published, and the fifth is in progress. This magazine is the most important Icelandic serial publication of historical and literary content, and has always maintained a high standard. In the volumes that appeared within the period with which we are dealing have been published lists of Icelandic bishops with documents bearing on their history, by Jón Sigurðsson; Jón Egilsson's *Bishops' Annals*, and Jón Gizursson's treatise on the period of the Reformation in Iceland, both edited by Jón Sigurðsson; Dr. Jón Þorkelsson's important essay on the *Fagrskinna* and *Ólafs saga helga*, refuting the claims of the Norwegian historical school; and Dr. Guðbrandur Vigfússon's momentous treatise on the chronology of the Icelandic sagas. The second volume included a list and brief biographical sketches of Icelandic lawspeakers and lawmen from the earliest times down to the end of the eighteenth century, by Jón Sigurðsson, and several essays by different hands on topography and place-names in the Icelandic sagas. The magazine is well-printed and provided with good indices.

In the fight for home rule and popular participation in the government of the country the lack of full and reliable information about the administration and the laws was keenly felt. The editors of the *Ný félagsrit* had complained of this, as we have seen; and Jón Sigurðsson realized perhaps better than any one else how important such knowledge was in order to awaken the people to full appreciation of their condition and to spur them on to more active interest in the political questions. A proposal of the Icelandic Department in Copenhagen to publish annually a work (*Departements-Tidende*) containing the laws and the principal letters of the government,<sup>2</sup> was in 1849 rejected

<sup>1</sup> See *Hvð íslenska Bókmentafélag 1816-1916*, pp. 57-59.

<sup>2</sup> *Lovs. f. Isl.* XIV, pp. 303-304 (June 16, 1849).

by the Minister of Finance as involving too much expense. Two years before, however, the government had granted a stipend to Jón Sigurðsson and Oddgeir Stephensen, to enable them to collect and edit the laws of Iceland,<sup>1</sup> which as *Lövsamling for Island* was issued in twenty-four volumes from 1853 to 1889. But this was a critical work, published in Danish and very expensive, so that it did not reach the general public in Iceland. Hence other publications were required for that purpose, and therefore the Copenhagen branch of the Icelandic Literary Society, of which Jón Sigurðsson was president, took the matter up. It was first suggested that these reports be included in the *Skírnir*, but it was soon found that the subject was too extensive to find place within its covers. Hence the society decided in 1854 to publish annually statistical reports under the title of *Skýrslur um landshagi á Íslandi*, and law reports with the title of *Tíðindi um stjórnarmálefni Íslands*. The first part of these two works was published in 1855, and thereafter every year saw a new part, until 1875. The parts were collected into volumes, the *Skýrslur* consisting of five volumes, the *Tíðindi* of three. The government later gave the society some support to publish these series. The *Tíðindi* covered the period from 1854 to 1874, and the editing was in charge of various jurists.<sup>2</sup> The *Skýrslur* contained statistical reports on the population, the economic conditions of the country in their various forms, the trade, the public finance, the properties of the churches and of the communities, and so on. Most of these were compiled by Sigurður Hansen; a few were by Arnljóttur Ólafsson and others. Noteworthy is a list of Icelandic proper names, by Hansen, in the first volume; also an article on the size of Iceland, by Halldór Guðmundsson, in the same volume. Both these series were discontinued after the granting of the constitution, as the publishing of these matters fell within the province of the government.<sup>3</sup>

During the sixth decade of the nineteenth century several attempts were made to publish periodicals of special interest to farmers. The first of these, entitled *Bóndi*, edited by

<sup>1</sup> *Lövs. f. Isl.* XIII, pp. 762-763 (Oct. 27, 1847).

<sup>2</sup> The editors of vol. i. were: Sveinn Skúlason, Sig. Hansen, and Sig. L. Jónasson; of vol. ii., Bergur Thorberg and Magnús Stephensen; of vol. iii., Júlíus Havsteen.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Lövs. f. Isl.* XXI, pp. 850-852 (July 17, 1874).

Jakob Guðmundsson,<sup>1</sup> was printed in Reykjavík in six octavo numbers from January to May 1851. Besides treating various phases of husbandry and farming, it also included a poem and a rural tale, *Pórður og Ólöf*, by Magnús Grímsson. An annual of a similar type saw the light at Akureyri in 1857, called **Húnvetningur**, published by a small local society in Húnavatnssýsla (*Búnaðar- og Lestrarfélagið í Svínavatns- og Bólstaðarhlíðarhreppum*). Another periodical of longer duration was the **Hirðir**, edited by Halldór Kr. Friðriksson and Dr. Jón Hjaltalín, and published in Reykjavík from Sept. 7, 1857, to Feb. 28, 1861, forming in all three volumes. It dealt exclusively with the scab on sheep which at that time threatened to ruin the farmers. There were divergences of opinion as to means of fighting the disease, the majority advocating ruthless killing of all infected animals, and a small minority advising medical treatment of them. This latter opinion was represented by the editors of the *Hirðir*, but strange as it may seem now, it was a most unpopular cause, until in the end the people realized that this was the only sensible measure. The last of the publications of this character, during the period dealt with here, was the annual **Höldur**, edited by Sveinn Skúlason and printed at Akureyri in 1861, but only one volume of it ever appeared.

Only two of the periodicals which have been mentioned above included occasionally illustrations (portraits or plates). The first Icelandic periodical which can be styled an illustrated publication, although its illustrations were few in number, is **Ný sumargjöf**,<sup>2</sup> an annual which was published in Copenhagen by Páll Sveinsson<sup>3</sup> during the years 1859–62 and 1865. It appeared in neat octavo volumes of some 130 pages, under the editorship of Steingrímur Thorsteinsson,<sup>4</sup> from whose pen came most of the contents. Benedikt Gröndal contributed a few

<sup>1</sup> Jakob Guðmundsson born 10, 1817, died as minister of Kvennabrekka May 7, 1890. See Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* Supplem. I, pp. 611–612; Jóh. Kristjánsson, *Alþingismannatal* 1906, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> The title has the epithet *Ný* because there was a *Sumargjöf*, by Guðmundur Jónsson, published at Leirárgarðar, 1795 (cf. *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.*, 1914, p. 299).

<sup>3</sup> About Páll Sveinsson (1818–74), see *Sunnarfari* XI, p. 20, portr.; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. III, pp. 313–314.

<sup>4</sup> Steingrímur Thorsteinsson was born May 19, 1831, and died Aug. 21, 1913. For his life, see especially J. C. Poestion, *Steingrímur Thorsteinsson, ein isländischer Dichter und Kulturbringer*. München u. Leipzig, 1912, 8°, pp. 152, portr.; *Islandica* VI, pp. 57–58.



articles. The volumes are principally filled with translations, such as stories by Washington Irving, Charles Dickens, Prosper Mérimée, Alex. Dumas, H. C. Andersen, and others; also a few poems, such as the *Króma* from the Ossian. Of historical articles may be noted one on the progress of the world since the discovery of Iceland, and another on science, poetry, and art in the Middle Ages. The periodical thus presented light, entertaining reading matter and enjoyed considerable popularity,<sup>1</sup> although the support it received from readers was not sufficient to keep it going longer.<sup>2</sup>

Rev. Sigurður Gunnarsson, minister of Hallormsstaður,<sup>3</sup> sent out in 1860 the first volume of his *Iðunn, sögurit um ýmsa menn og viðburði, lýsing landa og þjóða og náttúrunnar*, which was printed in the Akureyri press and was to be issued annually in not less than twenty sheets (320 pp.). For some reason or other no more than this one volume ever saw the light. It was an unusually well written, interesting and instructive publication, entirely from the pen of the editor himself; according to his statement in the preface, he had gathered the material in his leisure hours from different foreign books in his own library. More than two hundred of its three hundred odd pages are occupied by an article on Egypt, its geography, history, and present condition, written in a lucid, pleasant style. The rest is filled with shorter articles, on the papacy, which caused considerable controversy,<sup>4</sup> on the crusades, on the massacres of St. Bartholomew in 1572, and others. The *Iðunn* reminds one

<sup>1</sup> For reviews of it, see *Norðri* VII, 1859, pp. 118-119; VIII, 1860, pp. 86-87; IX, 1861, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> In 1863 Gísli Brynjúlfsson and Eiríkur Jónsson planned the publication of a monthly paper which was to appear in Copenhagen and to deal with current events, politics, literature, etc. Their circular probably was not well received in Iceland, and the monthly never was published. See *Íslendingur* III, 1862, p. 58; *Norðanfari* I, 1862, p. 70; II, 1863, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Sigurður Gunnarsson born Oct. 10, 1812, died Nov. 22, 1878. For his life, see *Andvari* XIII, pp. 1-18 (by Jón Jónsson); Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VI, pp. 306-307.

<sup>4</sup> Sveinn Skúlason reviewed the *Iðunn* favorably in *Norðri* VIII, 1860, p. 52, but in the same number there was printed an article against the Catholics. This together with the *Iðunn* article was answered by Rev. J. B. Baudoin in a supplementary number to *Þjóðólfur* (April 17, 1861) XIII, pp. 81-83, to which Sig. Gunnarsson answered in *Íslendingur* II, 1861, pp. 97-99. See also an article directed against the latter, by Dr. H. Bicknell in *Íslendingur*, supplement to vol. III, 1862, and Einar Thorlacius' answer in *Norðanfari* II, 1863, pp. 9-10.

of some of Magnús Stephensen's publications which have been treated above, and it is not unlikely that the editor had them in mind when he planned his annual; it is, however, conspicuously different from them in regard to language. Sigurður Gunnarsson had an easy pen and wrote a pure, clear style.

The attempts to publish a paper in the capital besides the *Pjóðólfur* had, as we have seen, met with little success, but after a while a new effort was made. In 1860 seven men of high standing in Reykjavík entered into partnership to publish a fortnightly paper. These were: Benedikt Sveinsson, associate judge of the Superior Court;<sup>1</sup> Einar Þórðarson, the printer;<sup>2</sup> Halldór Kr. Friðriksson, teacher in the College; Jón Hjaltalín, surgeon-general; Jón Pétursson, associate judge of the Superior Court; Páll Pálsson Melsteð, then acting prefect of Gullbringu- and Kjósarsýsla; and Pétur Guðjónsson, teacher of music in the College.<sup>3</sup> On March 26, 1860, the first number of the paper, which was called *Íslendingur* appeared.<sup>4</sup> And for three successive years, until April 25, 1863, there were published twenty-four numbers annually, of eight pages each in small folio. Benedikt Sveinsson was the editor-in-chief (*ábyrgðarmaður*), but most of the work on the paper was done by Páll Melsteð and Halldór Kr. Friðriksson; the former contributed many well-written articles, chiefly on historical subjects, to its columns.<sup>5</sup> The *Íslendingur* may without exaggeration be called one of the best papers ever published in the Icelandic language, and it set a new standard in Icelandic journalism. It maintained a good style with well selected contents. A great variety of subjects were, of course, treated; many popular articles on historical, medical, juridical, and scientific topics, from the pen of the editors or other

<sup>1</sup> Benedikt Sveinsson, born Jan. 20, 1827, died Aug. 2, 1899. After Jón Sigurðsson's death he was the leader of the liberal party. See his biography in *Andvari* XXV, pp. 1-35 (by Hannes Þorsteinsson) with portrait; cf. also Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XVI, pp. 619-620.

<sup>2</sup> Einar Þórðarson, born Dec. 23, 1818, died July 11, 1888. He was connected with the Viðey and Reykjavík press until he became the director of the latter in 1852, and in 1876 its owner. See *Prentarinn* III, 1912, pp. 29-30, portr.

<sup>3</sup> Pétur Guðjónsson, born Nov. 29, 1812, died Aug. 25, 1877. He was probably not very active on the paper; he was the leading musician of the country and published several works on music. About his life, see especially *Hljómlistin* I, pp. 1-12, portr.; *Almanak hins ísl. Þjóðvínafélags*, 1913, pp. 141-144, portr.

<sup>4</sup> About the founding of *Íslendingur*, see *Pjóðólfur* XII, p. 57.

<sup>5</sup> Páll Melsteð, *Endurminningar* 1912, pp. 88-89.

noted men, may be found in its pages. Domestic and foreign news was more fully reported than had been the case in any paper before. The feuilletons were entertaining and instructive, either consisting of translations from foreign languages, like some of Charles Dickens' stories, or historical narratives concerning foreigners (Ignatius Loyola, Garibaldi, David Livingstone, etc.) and Icelanders (Axlar-Björn, Fjalla-Eyvindur, etc.). Dr. Hjaltalín's long and valuable treatise on human food from native sources appeared in the second volume and was afterwards separately printed.<sup>1</sup> In politics the paper was liberal and supported the home rule party,<sup>2</sup> but it was not of the aggressive type like the *Pjóðólfur*; nor was there any love lost between the two papers.<sup>3</sup> In spite of many excellent qualities possessed by the *Íslendingur*, and notwithstanding the favor bestowed upon it by the government,<sup>4</sup> it could not maintain itself, and after three years it was abandoned by its original editors, with a debt of 900 ríxdalir to the printing office,<sup>5</sup> all of which shows that the journalistic profession was a precarious one in Iceland at that time. There were, perhaps, too many editors, and they did not always agree or work well together.<sup>6</sup> A fourth volume was, however, published, twelve eight-page numbers in quarto, from June 25, 1864, to June 22, 1865, under the editorship of Benedikt Sveinsson, Jón Pétursson, and Jón P. Thóroddsen; but this was different from the preceding volumes; it did not possess their merits, although it was by no means badly edited.<sup>7</sup> In it many of Thóroddsen's poems were first printed.

When the *Norðri* was discontinued (1861), Björn Jónsson resumed the control of the Akureyri press and immediately (January, 1862) started a new paper, the *Norðanfari*, which at first was a fortnightly, but of which later thirty-six numbers were published yearly, and towards the end of the period here treated it became a weekly, and thereafter the numbers were

<sup>1</sup> *Ritgjörð um manneldi*. Reykjavík, 1868, 8°, pp. viii + 79.

<sup>2</sup> Jón Sigurðsson approved of the paper (*Bréf*, 1911, p. 291), but later had some misgivings about its policy (*ibid.* pp. 305, 377).

<sup>3</sup> A contributor to *Pjóðólfur* (XIII, p. 107) calls the *Íslendingur* "Sjö höfðingja sonurinn."

<sup>4</sup> It was granted an exemption from postage in the overland mail (*Lous. f. Isl.* XVIII, p. 74; July 6, 1860).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Lous. f. Isl.* XIX, pp. 584-585; XX, pp. 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> See for instance *Pjóðólfur* XV, 1863, pp. 95-96.

<sup>7</sup> About vol. IV., cf. *Pjóðólfur* XVII, pp. 167-168.

increased to sixty or even more. It was in small folio and was modelled upon the *Íslendingur*. It remains in many respects a unique paper among Icelandic periodicals. The editor wrote hardly anything in it and consequently the paper had no definite policy of its own, but its columns were open to every one from any part of the country. Although the editor, in view of the great number of articles sent to him, must have had to make a selection, he does not seem to have always excluded inferior contributions, and in the paper we find good and bad side by side. This gives the volumes a very motley appearance. There were scholarly essays and reviews intermingled with boorish articles and letters. But this in a way adds to the interest of the paper, which now shows us various sides of Icelandic life at that time, and from its pages we can, perhaps, see better the popular sentiment than from any other contemporary publication. The inferior articles possibly predominated, and for that reason the *Norðanfari* was scornfully nicknamed *ruslaskrina* (lumber-box).<sup>1</sup> The language without doubt was often very plain and unpolished in many of the contributions.<sup>2</sup> One feature of the paper was the numerous, and often long, obituary notices and poems, but these were frequently issued in extra numbers. About political questions there was comparatively little published; the few articles during the earlier years on those topics were chiefly from the pen of Arnljótur Ólafsson. But there was no dearth of controversial articles of all kinds—philological, literary, religious, and what not; all sides were usually heard in the *Norðanfari*, and in that way it really often rendered good

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the stanzas printed in *Þjóðólfrur* XVIII, 1865, p. 12:  
Pegar eg les þetta blað,  
sem þykist koma norðanað,  
rekur mig í rogastanz  
á ruslakistu Norðurlands.

Öllu saman ægir hér  
illu og góðu sýnist mér;

rekur mig í rogastanz  
á ruslakistu Norðurlands.

Trúarsnauðum veitir vörn,  
í villu leiðir Drottins börn;  
rekur mig í rogastanz  
á ruslakistu Norðurlands.

<sup>2</sup> In one of its own pages (*Norðanfari* III, 1864, p. 43) the language in the paper is thus characterized by P. M. [= Páll Melsted?]: "Mér þykir Norðanfari stundum gæta helzt til lítið að hinu síðara [*i. e.* verða of hversdagslegur og útlendur í máli]; hann rekur sig á hina hversdagslegu boða; orðfæri á sumu (eg segi sumu, því margt er í honum eptir mínu viti í góðu lagi einnig hvað orðfæri snertir), sem hann hefir meðferðis, þykir mér líkast því, sem við værum að hjala snögglæddir og berfættir hver við annan út í mýrum, hafandi ekki þjóðina fyrir augum, heldur skóplöggin okkar þar sem þau liggja á einhverri mosabúfunni."

service. On the whole it was an interesting journalistic enterprise, and even to-day one turns its leaves with curiosity not unmixed with some pleasure. After 1874 it changed its character, losing many of its former features; this was largely due to the increasing number of periodicals which drew attention from the *Norðanfari*; after that, at least, its popularity was on the wane until it finally ceased to appear. The last number is dated Aug. 29, 1885, completing the twenty-fourth volume. In the following year Björn Jónsson died. Shortly before, he had collected in a booklet some of the translated stories which had appeared in the paper from time to time.<sup>1</sup>

Ten years after the first Icelandic Tract Society had discontinued its publications, a new society, *Hið íslenska kristilega smáritafélag*, was organized in Reykjavík Oct. 25, 1864,<sup>2</sup> with the same purpose, at the suggestion of Rev. Oddur V. Gíslason.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Pétur Pétursson was elected its president, and he was seemingly the principal contributor to the *Kristileg smárit handa Íslendingum*, which the society published during the five following years, and to which clergymen from all over the country were invited to send articles or other writings.<sup>4</sup> These tracts form three tiny octavo volumes, the first two (1865-66, 1866-68) consisting of eight numbers of sixteen pages each, the third (1869) of five numbers only. They contain chiefly religious or moralizing tales, a few hymns and poems, and some meditations, mostly translated. The society presumably received support from the British Tract Society to defray the expense of publication.

A new effort at maintaining a competitor to the *Pjóðólfur* was made in 1868, when the *Baldur* was started in Reykjavík. This time, however, it was not a more conservative organ which was aimed at, since the *Baldur* from the beginning displayed radical tendencies in almost every direction. It was published by an anonymous society, and the editor of volume one was Friðrik Guðmundsson,<sup>5</sup> of most of volume two (Nos. 4-21)

<sup>1</sup> *Safn af nokkrum sönnum og merkilegum sögum, sem prentaðar eru í Norðanfara*. I. hepti. Akureyri, 1885, 8°, pp. 62. No more published.

<sup>2</sup> See *Pjóðólfur* XVII, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> About O. V. Gíslason (1836-1911), see *Nýtt kirkjublað* VI, pp. 57-59.

<sup>4</sup> See *Pjóðólfur* XIX, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> He died Dec. 6, 1899, 62 years old.

Jörgen Peter Havsten Guðjohnsen,<sup>1</sup> while Nos. 1-3 of volume two and all of volume three were edited by Jón Ólafsson.<sup>2</sup> This last, who was to become one of Iceland's leading journalists, and who at that time was a student in the College, was the real editor of the *Baldur* throughout its course. He was an intelligent but impetuous youth with an easy pen, ambitious to figure in public life, but, as might be expected of his age, without a clear conception of the political problems.<sup>3</sup> The paper was largely devoted to political matters, and from the start was very aggressive, hence clashes with the *Pjóðólfur* were inevitable, the more so as the latter had not given the new paper a friendly reception and maintained throughout a hostile attitude towards it.<sup>4</sup> There were a few interesting articles published in the *Baldur*, and it counted among its contributors Jón Þorkelsson, Gísli Brynjúlfsson, and Jón Borgfirðingur. It did not enjoy a long existence; in the first year (1868) eighteen numbers were printed, in the second (1869) twenty-one, and in the third (1870) only four, the last of which contained the famous *Íslendingabragur*, a political poem by Jón Ólafsson, for which he was prosecuted.<sup>5</sup> He was, however, acquitted by the Superior Court, but the prosecution led to the discontinuance of the *Baldur* and to a voluntary exile for some time on part of its youthful editor.

A periodical devoted to history, genealogy, and jurisprudence, was founded in 1869 by Jón Pétursson,<sup>6</sup> associate judge of the Superior Court; it was originally planned as a quarterly, but was actually published in four annual volumes, in small octavo, under the title of *Tímarit* edited by Jón Pétursson (1869-71, 1873). They included two legal treatises (by the editor and Bjarni E. Magnússon); one of a historico-legal character by

<sup>1</sup> Born June 2, 1843, died April 9, 1901.

<sup>2</sup> Jón Ólafsson, born March 20, 1850, died July 11, 1916. For his life and works, see especially his autobiography (unfinished) in *Iðunn* I-II, 1915-16; *Islandica* VI, pp. 41-42; *Óðinn* IV, pp. 41-42, portr.; *Sunnansfari* IV, pp. 17-18, portr.; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* XII, pp. 388-389; *Iðunn* II, 1916, pp. 82-100 (by Ágúst H. Bjarnason). Of particular interest is Jón Ólafsson's article in the *Iðunn* III, 1917, pp. 100-122.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf* 1911, pp. 444, 488, 520, 522.

<sup>4</sup> *Pjóðólfur* XX, pp. 34-35, 41-42, 58-59; XXI, pp. 53-54, 61, etc.

<sup>5</sup> About the case, see *Pjóðólfur* XXII, pp. 77, 85, 105, 112, 117, 125, 178, 182.

<sup>6</sup> Jón Pétursson, born Jan. 16, 1812, died Jan. 16, 1896; he was chief justice 1877-89. For his life, see *Andvari* XXVI, pp. i-xiii (by H. Kr. Friðriksson), portr.; *Sunnansfari* I, pp. 61-62, portr.; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon*, XIII, p. 130; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon*, Supplem. II, pp. 666-667.

Brynjólfur Jónsson; but most of the space was devoted to genealogy (genealogy of the members of the Althing in 1867, by the editor, and portions of Bogi Benediktsson's *Sýslumann-aæfir*), and to an edition of old diplomas and deeds (Bishop Auðunn's *Máldagabók*, etc.). The magazine was carefully edited, but its sale was very limited and therefore it ceased to appear.

The *Gangleri* was published in quarterly octavo numbers at Akureyri in 1870, by a few Eyfjordings and edited by Friðbjörn Steinsson.<sup>1</sup> The following year it was issued in twenty-four numbers in quarto. It was started as a periodical for entertaining and instructive matters, but not really as a newspaper, although the second volume has the character of one. The articles dealt some with historical and political subjects, others with natural history and related themes; included also were a few translated stories, poems, and two original Icelandic tales.<sup>2</sup> In the second year considerable space was devoted to news, but in that field it had a competitor on the spot in the *Norðan-fari*. The *Gangleri* apparently had a wide circulation for the first year (700 subscribers), but this soon fell off.<sup>3</sup> The paper lacked distinctive features.

A unique place within the periodical literature of Iceland is occupied by the *Gefn*, which was written, published, and edited by Benedikt Gröndal,<sup>4</sup> and printed in Copenhagen 1870-74, in five octavo volumes of which two (1871-72) were published in two parts, each with a separate pagination. The *Gefn* is a monument to the editor's versatility and wide knowledge, but it also bears witness to his peculiarities and eccentricities. The volumes cover a variety of subjects in poetry and prose. The poetical part is the smaller of the two, and includes poems like the philosophical *Hugfró*, the mythological *Brisingamen*, a translation of Theodor Körner's *Kynast*, and various smaller pieces.

<sup>1</sup> Born April 5, 1838, died April 10, 1918. Cf. *Templar* XX, pp. 17-18, portr.

<sup>2</sup> The first of these is signed: T., the second: T. H.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Norðan-fari* XI, p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Benedikt Sveinbjarnarson Gröndal was born Oct. 6, 1826, and died Aug. 2, 1907. For his life and works, see especially *Benedikt Gröndal áttæður*. Reykjavík, 1906, 8°, pp. 128, with portraits; *Andvari* XXXIV, pp. v-xvi (by Þorsteinn Gíslason), portr.; *Sunnan-fari* IV, pp. 33-35 (by Þorstein Erlingsson), portr.; *Óðinn* II, pp. 49-55, portr.; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon*, VI, pp. 267-268; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexikon*, Supplem. I, pp. 605-606. He published himself a list of his earlier writings, in *Karállogos Prose and Poems Rit og ljóðmáli*. Reykjavík, 1885, 8°, pp. 22.

In the first volume is to be found a fairly full, well-written account of the Franco-Prussian war which has a continuation in the second. In this also the editor entered upon the slippery ground of Icelandic-Danish political relations in an article entitled *Frelsi-Menntan-Framför*, which gave rise to controversy and criticism, the author being attacked by both Danish and Icelandic writers.<sup>1</sup> Gröndal was no successful politician; his temperament made him unable to control his pen, and of diplomatic qualities he had few or none. Though there was some appropriate criticism in the article, it was ill advised to publish this at the time. The second volume furthermore contained an article on Arctic explorations, and another on archaeology.<sup>2</sup> The third volume included articles on contemporary scientific discoveries, on the colonization of Tasmania, on ethnology and history, and further remarks on Icelandic conditions. In this also was published the first part of a treatise on the *Sæmundar Edda*, which was completed in the following year; there the author defended the tradition ascribing the collection to Sæmund the Learned. The fourth volume, in addition, included a critical essay on contemporary Icelandic literature, and a philosophical dissertation on knowledge in which was inserted a sonnet on Dante. The fifth and last volume the author devoted to a brief natural history of Iceland.<sup>3</sup> In all these writings Gröndal frequently advanced heterodox opinions, but all of them bear the individualistic stamp of their author, who always managed to interest and entertain his readers, whatever subject he chose for discussion. The *Gefn* sold well and has long been out of print.

In 1869 the Reykjavík section of the Icelandic Literary Society decided to publish an annual record of Icelandic events similar to that of foreign events found in the *Skírnir*, and it was agreed upon that this should be printed as a supplement to that annual. The first record, covering the years 1869-70, written by Eiríkur Briem,<sup>4</sup> accordingly appeared in the *Skírnir* for 1870. It was, however, soon found more appropriate that it should

<sup>1</sup> The article was also published in Danish as a separate pamphlet with the title: *Bemærkninger om islandske Forhold*. Kjöbenhavn, 1870, 8°, pp. 56. Cf. *Pjóðólfsur* XXIII, pp. 92-93.

<sup>2</sup> For criticism of this, see *Norðanfari* XI, pp. 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> For reviews of this, see *Pjóðólfsur* XXVI, p. 140; *Vikverji* II, pp. 131-132.

<sup>4</sup> See *Islandica* VI, p. 11.



be printed in Reykjavík as a separate annual publication, and so it appeared in 1873, under the title of *Fréttir frá Íslandi*.<sup>1</sup> This was the record for 1871, written by Valdimar Briem,<sup>2</sup> by whom the subsequent volumes were written down to 1878. In 1892 the *Fréttir* was again united with the *Skírnir* and remained so until the latter was made a quarterly magazine;<sup>3</sup> since that change took place, every year a brief survey of Icelandic events is printed in the *Skírnir*. When the *Fréttir* was established there was more need for such a publication than afterwards, when the newspapers had reached a higher stage of development; the volumes constitute a useful work of reference.

A fortnightly paper called *Tíminn* was started at Akureyri in 1871 by some Northlanders and edited by Jónas Sveinsson. Only two numbers, however, appeared there (March 6, and April 22, 1871), and after an interval of nearly a year the paper reappeared in Reykjavík (Feb. 2, 1872) under the same editor. With No. 11 a new editor assumed responsibility for the publication; this was Páll Eyjúlffsson,<sup>4</sup> and he remained the nominal editor until the paper ceased to appear; the publishers were said to be some Reykvikings. In all three volumes in small quarto were published, the last number bearing the date of Dec. 21, 1874. It was an insignificant paper, apparently without any definite policy, although it was charged that behind it were some members of the conservative party or higher government officials.<sup>5</sup> Still it got into troubles with the authorities, and was even threatened with exclusion from the printing office.<sup>6</sup>

A most useful periodical, and one which was greatly needed under the conditions then existing in Iceland, was the *Heilbrigðistíndi*, which Dr. Jón Hjaltalín,<sup>7</sup> surgeon-general of Iceland, founded in 1871. It appeared in monthly numbers of sixteen

<sup>1</sup> Reviewed in *Víkverji* II, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> See *Íslandica* VI, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> See *Hjð íslenska Bókmentafélag 1816-1916*, p. 63. Cf. *Catal. of the Icel. Coll.*, 1914, p. 166.

<sup>4</sup> Páll Eyjúlffsson, born Feb. 23, 1822, died March 30, 1894; was a goldsmith by occupation. Cf. *Pjóðólfsur* XLVI, 1894, p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf*, 1911, p. 558; cf. *Norðanfari* XI, pp. 93, 125-126; XIV, pp. 9, 31-32.

<sup>6</sup> See *Tíminn* III, pp. 6-7; *Pjóðólfsur* XXVI, p. 47.

<sup>7</sup> Jón Jónsson Hjaltalín, born April 21, 1807, died June 8, 1882. He was surgeon-general from 1855 until his death. For his life and works, see *Andvari* XI, pp. 1-19 (by H. Kr. Friðriksson), portr.; XII, pp. 184-185; Erslew, *Forfatter-Lexicon* I, pp. 654-655; Supplem. I, pp. 793-794; Bricka, *Dansk biograf. Lexikon* VII, pp. 458-460.

pages and was entirely devoted to hygienic and medical topics, popularly treated and with special reference to Icelandic conditions. It was written by Dr. Hjaltalín himself and published at his own expense. He kept it going for three years (1871-73), and in 1879 published a new volume, because, as he said in the introduction to this, he had found on his travels in the country that the earlier ones were owned and appreciated in numerous homes, and that many had expressed a desire that the publication be continued. This last volume covered a wider field than the others, but the support it received from subscribers was small, and disappointed, the editor had to discontinue it. The *Heilbrigðistíðindi*, in spite of its short life, spread much knowledge in the subjects it dealt with and brought about improvements in sanitary conditions among the people.

After his return from abroad, Jón Ólafsson soon reverted to journalism, but his first enterprise in that line was on a very small scale. He published in 1872 two leaflets under the title *Smávegis*, which was to appear from time to time "when the weather was good"; they contained poems and a few other trifles, and were printed at Elliðavatn in a small printing press which Benedikt Sveinsson had established there. The press, however, had not received the authorization of the government, hence the editor was prosecuted for publishing these leaflets and fined.<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of the same year Jón Ólafsson nevertheless reappeared in the rôle of an editor. This time the paper was called *Göngu-Hrólfur*, and the first number was printed in Reykjavík on Dec. 24, 1872. It was to appear in forty-eight small quarto numbers yearly, but only fourteen were actually printed, the last having the date of July 14, 1873. The paper was very radical and even more aggressive than the *Baldur*; in some respects it was quite interesting, and among other things which it published were a few articles which brought to the Icelandic public the news of an intellectual movement that recently had been started in Denmark. It contained many poems by the editor, some of them with music, and it was thus the first among Icelandic papers to publish musical pieces. Another novel feature was a summary of the contents of other Icelandic periodicals of the day. The violent attacks in its

<sup>1</sup> See *Dómasafn* for 1873, pp. 39-42; *Pjóðlífur* XXIV, pp. 65, 73, 120, 124; *Tíminn* II, p. 41; *Iðunn* II, 1917, pp. 91-93.

columns on the governor-general of Iceland finally led to its suspension; the editor was prosecuted anew and convicted of libel,<sup>1</sup> but he escaped from the country and found his way to America.

The maintenance of a paper of some consequence in Reykjavík besides the *Pjóðólfur* was again discussed, but there were always some obstacles in the way. In 1871 a circular was sent out about such a paper, but the scheme fell through as a sufficient number of subscribers could not be found,<sup>2</sup> and the matter rested for about two years. In 1872 Jón Jónsson<sup>3</sup> became the chief of the governor-general's bureau (*landritari*). He was a man of uncommon energy and will-power; and he soon took the question of a newspaper into his own hands and founded one for the most part at his own expense. This was the *Víkverji*. The founder, however, appeared in print neither as owner nor the editor, although anonymously he contributed articles to it. The editorship was entrusted to Páll Melsteð,<sup>4</sup> whose good pen and journalistic experience proved to be of great value to the new paper. The *Víkverji* was a very good newspaper, and besides published numerous well-written articles on literary, economical, and political topics. It was usually at odds with the *Pjóðólfur*,<sup>5</sup> and it was frequently charged with a friendlier attitude towards Denmark than was becoming in an Icelandic paper.<sup>6</sup> The charge, however, was not justified, although the paper in some respects disagreed with the political group which fought most valiantly for home rule. The paper gave a very full account of the events connected with the millennial celebration in 1874. An innovation was a list, in every number, of historical or red-letter days during the week. As a separate supplement a collection of the decisions of the higher courts (*Dómasafn*) was printed. The *Víkverji* was published in small quarto num-

<sup>1</sup> See *Dómasafn* for 1873, pp. 6-13, 26-30; *Pjóðólfur* XXV, pp. 77, 109, 113, 124, 152, 158; *Tíminn* II, pp. 51-52, 59-60.

<sup>2</sup> See *Pjóðólfur* XXIV, 1871, p. 8.—Cf. Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf*, 1911, p. 535.

<sup>3</sup> Jón Jónsson (Johnsen), born April 23, 1841, died Jan. 4, 1883. See *Tímarit hins ísl. Bókmenntafélags* III, pp. 231-232; *Ísafold* X, p. 1; *Pjóðólfur* XXXV, pp. 5-6.

<sup>4</sup> See Páll Melsteð, *Endurminningar*, 1912, p. 97.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Pjóðólfur* XXV, pp. 170-171, 179-180; XXVI, pp. 3-4, 200.

<sup>6</sup> See *Nordanfari* XIII, pp. 39-40; cf. also Jón Sigurðsson, *Bréf*, 1911, pp. 576, 577-78.

bers during the period from June 12, 1873, to Sept. 11, 1874; ninety numbers were printed in all.<sup>1</sup> It sold well and could easily have maintained itself, but it is said that the governor-general ordered his bureau-chief to sever his connections with it for political or official reasons; hence it was sold to Björn Jónsson, who at that time founded the *Ísafold*, a paper which finally succeeded in taking a permanent place beside the *Pjóðólfrur* as the leading newspaper in the country; the history of this, however, lies outside the limits of our work.

Shortly after the middle of the nineteenth century emigration from Iceland to America, commenced,<sup>2</sup> and in the papers of the following decades are to be found many articles on the subject, mostly directed against emigration. Numerous letters from emigrants were also printed, especially in the *Norðanfari*. But towards the end of the period with which we are dealing, there appeared a publication exclusively devoted to the subject. This was the *Ameríka*, which was printed at Akureyri in five octavo numbers of sixteen pages, from Dec. 30, 1873, to July 7, 1874. The editor was Páll Magnússon, an agent for a Norwegian steamship line. The contents of these numbers consisted of descriptions of various parts of the United States and Canada, information for those who wished to emigrate, news and letters from those who had settled on the other side of the Atlantic, and other similar things characteristic of that kind of publications.

After suspending the *Heilbrigðistiðindi*, Dr. Jón Hjaltalín published and edited another monthly of the same size, which was called *Sæmundur fróði*, and which ran for only one year (Jan.-Dec., 1874). It was written almost entirely by the editor himself and the subjects treated there covered a much wider field than his preceding periodical. The largest part of it, perhaps, was devoted to the natural resources of Iceland and their utilization; there were articles on farm products; an historical treatise on climatic conditions and bad seasons; also much on medical topics; and even the news of the day was included, with occasional poems. The first number contained a biographical sketch of Sæmund the Learned, after whom the

<sup>1</sup> Title-page and table of contents were promised, but these probably were never printed.

<sup>2</sup> For a brief history of the emigration from Iceland to America, see Hafsteinn Pétursson's articles in *Árný* 1901, pp. 33-48, and *Tjaldubúðin* VIII, 1902, pp. 3-12.

periodical was named, by Halldór Kr. Friðriksson, and a long introductory article by the editor, on the aims and purposes of the paper. In this, among other things, he came to mention philosophy and religion, and severely arraigned certain scientific tendencies which he denounced as materialistic. This called forth criticism and a controversy followed;<sup>1</sup> it must be admitted that Dr. Hjaltalín showed a strong prejudice against, or lack of understanding for a number of the later movements within the field of science and philosophy. The *Sæmundur fróði* was in many respects an interesting paper,<sup>2</sup> but hardly one which would find a large circulation.

I have now briefly reviewed the Icelandic periodicals from the beginning down to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. They are some fifty in number, and many of them were not of much consequence, nor did most of them have a long existence. Nevertheless, taken as a whole this periodical literature is noteworthy. By analyzing it, we can see how the nation, after a long era of stagnation and foreign rule, gradually raised its head, became conscious of itself, and concentrated its effort upon reforms and progress, with the ultimate aim of regaining its independence. This process, fumbling and slow as it often was, can be traced in the periodical literature. First there came the movement for improving the economic conditions of the people by introducing liberty of trade and new methods and reforms in the principal forms of livelihood of the inhabitants. In the wake of this followed the efforts to elevate intellectual standards and literary taste, and finally the demand was made for self-government and political liberty, the first important step in which was reached by the constitution of 1874.<sup>3</sup> That gave the nation a power to manage its own affairs to a certain extent, and through it the popular feeling of responsibility matured and men gradually gained confidence in themselves and in their country. Yet there was a hard struggle ahead, and it was not until 1904 that the government was transferred to the national capital; and as these pages are written another step to a wider self-government is about to be effected.

<sup>1</sup> See *Norðanfari* XIII, pp. 78-79, 84 (signed: Styrmer); Hjaltalín's reply, p. 111; also *Sæmundur fróði*, pp. 126-128, 137-139, 175-176.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Þjóðólfur* XXVI, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> A popular sketch of this period is to be found in Jón Jónsson, *Dagrenning. Fimm alþýðuerindi*. Reykjavík, 1910, 8°, pp. (8) + 151. Cf. also Bishop Jón Helgason, *Fra Islands Dæmringstíð*. Copenhagen 1918, 8°, pp. 120.

The periodicals have had great difficulty in maintaining themselves. The obstacles were many for the editors and publishers to overcome. To begin with, there was the difficulty of co-operation and of gathering news and material for the papers, which among other things made it impossible to have dailies. Then there was the question of distribution; the mail service was of a primitive sort and hardly adapted to carrying newspapers and the like; the editors therefore could not depend on the mails and had often to resort to other means of distribution; the papers were often carried by travellers, who for a small payment, or gratuitously, in order to render service to their friends, took with them bundles of papers. The collecting of subscriptions was another problem. The custom of barter has until quite recently been prevalent in Iceland; ready money was therefore scarce in the rural districts, hence followed that often the farmers and fishermen paid the subscription price to their merchant in kind, and he credited the editor with the sum. This naturally was rather unsatisfactory but it was often the only way to collect the subscriptions. The publishers had to depend as a rule entirely on the subscriptions as advertising was a very small source of income for them, commercial advertisements being practically unknown during the period. Professional journalism did not exist. The editors were usually men of some other profession or occupation, their editorial work being done in their leisure hours. But they were often the leading men of the country, and thus sacrificed their time and means to what they considered a good cause.

The year 1874 may be considered as a turning point in this literature; not that the change was immediately noticeable; it came on slowly as political, economic, and literary conditions were modified and altered, and as there were brought to the front new problems, new papers, and new men.

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## CORRIGENDA AND ERRATA.

|              |                           |                    |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Page 4, line | 7, for plurrima           | read plurima       |
| — 4, —       | 19, for puntantur         | read putantur      |
| — 16, —      | 18, for fulgitam          | read fulgidam      |
| — 20, —      | 12, for Eodam             | read Eodem         |
| — 23, —      | 10, for mœsoribus         | read mœroribus     |
| — 24, —      | 25, for eripisse [MS.]    | read eripuisse     |
| — 24, —      | 36, for Splendabat        | read Splendebat    |
| — 25, —      | 9, for Domini             | read Domine        |
| — 26, —      | 6, for latiqve            | read lateqve       |
| — 26, —      | 11, for abruit            | read obruit        |
| — 26, —      | 18, for lactardæ [MS.]    | read lactandæ      |
| — 29, —      | 46, for convertus         | read conversus     |
| — 30, —      | 8, for devovantes         | read devoventes    |
| — 33, —      | 38, for se                | read si            |
| — 34, —      | 12, for autumerit         | read autumarit     |
| — 37, —      | 10, for maritis sitis     | read mari dissitis |
| — 37, —      | 34, for denissimam        | read densissimam   |
| — 38, —      | 12, for adderam           | read adderem       |
| — 39, —      | 16, for fede              | read fide          |
| — 40, —      | 21, for Pescatores        | read Piscatores    |
| — 40, —      | 27, for portentorum       | read portentorum   |
| — 41, —      | 8, for ineqvitando        | read ineqvitando   |
| — 42, —      | 17, for mammos            | read mammas        |
| — 42, —      | 20, for poterent          | read poterant      |
| — 45, —      | 13, for exqvi-            | read exqvishi-     |
| — 46, —      | 27, for generent          | read generant      |
| — 49, —      | 18 and 19, for Passex     | read Passer        |
| — 49, —      | 31, for subeint           | read subeunt       |
| — 49, —      | 36, for pectumculus       | read pectunculus   |
| — 50, —      | 11, for arrupto           | read arrepto       |
| — 51, —      | 23, for sortuntur         | read sortiuntur    |
| — 51, —      | 34, for grisco            | read griseo        |
| — 52, —      | 2, for grisca             | read grisea        |
| — 52, —      | 28, for digerent          | read degerent      |
| — 52, —      | 30, for qvandum           | read qvendam       |
| — 54, —      | 30, for reliqvæ           | read reliqvæ       |
| — 55, —      | 2, for Gallmago           | read Gallinago     |
| — 55, —      | 22, for aculcatas         | read aculeatas     |
| — 60, —      | 4, for Descendiunt        | read Descendunt    |
| — 64, —      | 6, for eorundum           | read eorundem      |
| — 64, —      | 26, for salebrocis        | read salebrosis    |
| — 67, —      | 12, for servieret         | read servierit     |
| — 69, —      | 38, for raudawedur        | read raudawndur    |
| — 71, —      | 4, for nullum             | read nullam        |
| — 71, —      | 16, for possessoribus     | read possessoribus |
| — 74, —      | 18, for induentes         | read induentes     |
| — 77, —      | 10, for notissimæ [MS.]   | read notissima     |
| — 77, —      | 14, for fœniseiorum [MS.] | read fœniseiorum   |
| — 79, —      | 2-3, for exercent         | read exercent      |
| — 79, —      | 7, for scuptilia          | read sculptilia    |
| — 79, —      | 23, for caudem [MS.]      | read caudam        |
| — 82, —      | 25, for gennis            | read gemmis        |





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